

# NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA



## THESIS

### UNITED STATES-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONS: SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE

by

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December 1996

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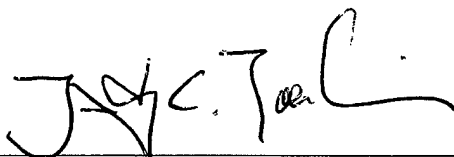
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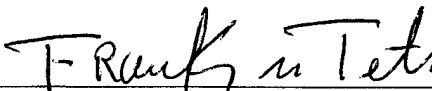
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## ABSTRACT

This thesis examines the viability of the United States-Japan security relationship by considering four scenarios. The scenarios are discussed using a number of specific factors likely to affect the security relationship in the future. The relationship is also considered abstractly using international relations theory to highlight 'systemic' explanations for the behavior of various states in the scenarios. First, the security relationship could come to an end if America is increasingly viewed as the 'policeman' of Asia or the 'cap in the bottle' of Japan without an identifiable benefit to match that role. While the United States was willing to subordinate economic concerns for the sake of security in the past, this will be increasingly difficult in the future. Second, the security arrangement could be threatened if Japan assumes a security role commensurate with its political and economic position in East Asia. If Japan increases the size of its military, this could cloud the rationale for the presence of American military forces in Japan. Japan might choose to do so because of regional dynamics, such as Korean unification; conflict caused by a fragmented or 'weak' China; or the emergence of a regional trading bloc in East Asia. Third, the emergence of China as the dominant power in East Asia might threaten the United States and Japan and reinvigorate their security alliance. China's efforts to increase its influence in the region could cause uneasiness in the United States and Japan causing them to act as a 'balance' against China. Fourth, efforts to update the relationship could ensure its long-term survival. Reassessing the purpose of the relationship and moving it from the needs of the Cold War to the realities of the post-Cold War era would be key to any effort to update it. In this context, the United States might consider changing the bilateral relationship into a larger multilateral security regime in East Asia.



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

I. INTRODUCTION: BILATERAL RELATIONS.....	1
A. UNCERTAINTY IN THE EAST.....	1
B. AMERICA'S INVOLVEMENT IN EAST ASIA.....	4
C. SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE.....	7
II. AN ABSTRACT VIEW OF THE RELATIONSHIP.....	11
A. THE REALIST APPROACH.....	11
B. CHANGE WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM.....	13
III. UNITED STATES-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONS: 1945 TO PRESENT.....	21
A. EARLY OCCUPATION PERIOD.....	23
B. EARLY COLD WAR PERIOD.....	24
C. POLITICAL AND BUREAUCRATIC CONSTRAINTS.....	27
D. COLD WAR CHANGES IN DEFENSE POLICY.....	33
E. POST-COLD WAR PERIOD.....	41
F. CONTINUITY AND CHANGE.....	47
IV. SCENARIO ONE: EAST ASIA'S POLICEMAN?.....	53
A. THE PRIMACY OF THE DOMESTIC AGENDA.....	54
B. THE CHALLENGE FROM EAST ASIA.....	58
C. A SYSTEMIC VIEW: THE DOMINANT POWER CUTS EXPENSES.....	64
V. SCENARIO TWO: JAPAN BECOMES 'NORMAL'.....	69
A. A NORMAL NATION?.....	69
B. THE DYNAMICS OF A UNIFIED KOREA.....	74
C. THE DYNAMICS OF A 'WEAK' CHINA.....	81
D. THE DYNAMICS OF INCREASED REGIONALISM.....	89
E. A SYSTEMIC VIEW: DANGEROUS DISEQUALIBRIUM.....	93
VI. SCENARIO THREE: A REGIONAL THREAT 'RESCUES' THE ALLIANCE.....	95
A. THE CASE FOR CHINA.....	95
B. CHINA AS A REGIONAL HEGEMON?.....	97
C. A RESURGENT RUSSIA?.....	102
D. 'RESCUING' THE SECURITY RELATIONSHIP.....	103
E. A SYSTEMIC VIEW: THE CONSEQUENCES OF RETRENCHMENT.....	105
VII. SCENARIO FOUR: UPDATING THE RELATIONSHIP.....	107
A. MULTILATERALISM IN EAST ASIA?.....	108
B. TERMINATING THE 'UNEQUAL TREATY'.....	122
C. A SYSTEMIC VIEW: CORRECTING THE DISEQUALIBRIUM.....	132



VIII. CONCLUSION: COMMON THEMES.....	135
A. CHINA'S FUTURE.....	135
B. AMERICA'S ABILITY TO LEAD.....	137
C. JAPANESE POLITICAL REFORM.....	143
D. VARIABLES THAT SHALL SHAPE THE FUTURE.....	153
BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	157
INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST.....	163



## I. INTRODUCTION: BILATERAL RELATIONS

### A. UNCERTAINTY IN THE EAST

At the height of the Cold War, United States Ambassador Mike Mansfield characterized the security relationship between the United States and Japan as "the most important bilateral relationship in the world, bar none."<sup>1</sup> Perhaps his colleagues in Europe did not agree with his assessment, but none could argue the relationship was unimportant. An argument can be made that Mansfield's assertion is more true now than when he first made it (again, some would disagree). The February 1995 *United States Security Strategy for the Asia-Pacific Region*, published by the Department of Defense, continues to echo this sentiment.<sup>2</sup> In addition to being the most important bilateral relationship, it is perhaps the most paradoxical. This is mainly due to the fact that the United States remains the ultimate guarantor of Japan's security while competing economically with Japan.

Implicit in Mansfield's statement and explicit in this thesis is the argument that, despite this paradox, the security relationship is important to the stability of East Asia, and therefore, in the national interest of both the United States and Japan. Before exploring the relationship in detail, several questions must be addressed. For instance, what is the source of the regional instability which the security alliance presumably prevents? There are various trends which could produce instability in East Asia. However, it is important to understand that many of these trends are the result of the uncertainty which exists in

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Vogel, Ezra F., "Japanese-American Relations After the Cold War," *Daedalus*, Fall 1992, p. 35.

<sup>2</sup> *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*, Department of Defense, February 1995, p. 10.

East Asia (and the world at large) because of the end of the Cold War. In an article in *Security Studies*, Emily O. Goldman writes that when developing strategies, states experience uncertainty in four dimensions. First, states experience “threat uncertainty” or the “absence of the prior, traditional, or familiar threat pattern, or the absence of a clearly defined threat.” Clearly, the end of the Cold War and a reduced Russian threat has caused many in East Asia to struggle with this type of uncertainty as they begin to reassess the viability of the present security paradigm. Second, states experience “alliance uncertainty,” which is based on the presence of a number of states which have the potential to be either an ally or an adversary. For instance, this type of uncertainty might lead a state such as South Korea (or a unified Korea) to ask itself if its interests are best served in trying to maintain good relations with Japan or seeking closer ties with China. Third, states experience “resource uncertainty,” which leads to the age-old debate over ‘guns or butter.’ In the face of this type of uncertainty, states attempt to “balance the military risks facing the state, for which defense assets provide insurance, against the opportunity costs of devoting scarce economic resources to unproductive armaments.” Finally, states experience “operational uncertainty” or the lack of “knowledge about the type of conflict” for which to prepare. With this type of uncertainty, leaders in East Asia attempt to avoid the dangers associated with ‘preparing to fight the last war.’<sup>3</sup>

In the face of this uncertainty, what are the trends which point toward instability in East Asia? Actually, many parts of the world seem to be experiencing instability (in places such as the Balkans or East Africa), much of it caused by issues that were suppressed

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<sup>3</sup> Goldman, Emily O., “Thinking About Strategy Absent the Enemy,” *Security Studies*, Autumn 1994, pp. 42-44.

during the superpower face-off of the Cold War. East Asia seems to be an area ripe for this type of instability. Though the Cold War had fronts (and battles) in East Asia, its roots were fundamentally European in nature. East Asia inherited the Cold War from the Western powers that occupied the region at the end of the Second World War. That is not to say this region would have necessarily been free from conflict without the Cold War. In fact, East Asia has many potential conflicts and rivalries which predate the Cold War and are likely to resurface in the future. If multilateral security regimes serve to ameliorate instability (a subject of some debate), then this is unfortunate for East Asia because no such structure emerged there during the Cold War as it did in Western Europe. This might prove distressing since the major powers in East Asia are involved in potentially contentious territorial disputes: China and Japan over the Diaoyutao Islands (Senkaku Islands); Japan and Russia over the Kurile Islands; China and various countries over the Spratly Islands; and, of course, the dispute between China and Taiwan.

In the Summer 1994 issue of *Survival*, Barry Buzan and Gerald Segal point to another source of instability. Specifically, East Asia has been dominated by outside Western powers over the past one hundred years. As a result, East Asian states have little modern experience dealing with each other, except in the context of the Great Powers early in this century or the superpowers during the Cold War. While the Cold War saw several East Asia states flower into strong economic powers, in terms of international relations among these states it was a constraining factor. Many contentious regional issues were suppressed during the Cold War, but without the "overlay" of superpower competition "local patterns of amity, enmity, and balance of power" are beginning to

reemerge. Buzan and Segal relate East Asia to the situation in the former Soviet Union, "where a group of wholly new states have both to find their feet and work out their interrelationships." Perhaps even more frightening, they compare East Asia with nineteenth century Europe, "where a cluster of powerful, nationalistic, and industrializing states had to deal with boundary disputes, historical fears, and status rivalries."<sup>4</sup>

## **B. AMERICA'S INVOLVEMENT IN EAST ASIA**

If the region has such potential for instability, one might be tempted to inquire about the importance of East Asia to the United States or why would America choose to involve itself in the region's affairs. It is important enough that the United States deemed it necessary to go to war in the region three times within a twenty-five year period this century. Of course, those wars were fought in the context of halting Japanese expansion and containing the Soviet Union. Does the region remain so important without those obviously important mandates? I believe so, if for no other reason, because much of America's prosperity is tied to the region. In terms of trade, the region grows in importance each year. The United States has quadrupled its trade with Asia since the late 1970s and now conducts fifty percent more trade across the Pacific than across the Atlantic. East Asia, in particular, is more important to the United States in terms of commerce than in past decades. This is exemplified by the fact that the tiny state of Singapore now buys more American products than either Italy or Spain.<sup>5</sup> In a broader sense, trade with East Asia is more important to other nations as well, notably those in

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<sup>4</sup> Buzan, Barry, and Gerald Segal, "Rethinking East Asian Security," *Survival*, Summer 94, p. 8.

<sup>5</sup> McNaughter, Thomas L., "U.S. Military Forces in East Asia: The Case for Long-Term Engagement," in Curtis, Gerald L., ed., *The United States, Japan and Asia* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994), p. 125.

Western Europe. This simply reflects the fact that East Asia has been an area of tremendous economic growth in the past few decades.

If it is important, where does East Asia fit in the pecking order of American interests? In *Seize the Moment*, Richard Nixon rank ordered interests as vital, critical, and peripheral. He wrote, "An interest is vital if its loss, in and of itself, directly endangers the United States." He goes on to define a critical interest as one which threatens a vital interest and a peripheral interest as one which is only of distant concern to the United States.<sup>6</sup> Given these definitions and in view of the figures mentioned above, I believe the stability of East Asia is a vital American national interest.

If the potential for instability is real and this threatens a vital interest of the United States, why is the security alliance with Japan a stabilizing factor in East Asia? I believe it promotes stability by preventing other powers from attempting to dominate the region and because it reduces tensions caused by traditional suspicions and hostilities. While many see the alliance as outdated because of the end of the Cold War, I would argue that the alliance remains beneficial to both the United States and Japan because it promotes stability in this uncertain era. While the alliance should be changed or modified to better meet the realities of the post-Cold War era, the underlying logic of the relationship remains--promoting stability. Many who see the United States military presence as a stabilizing factor often make their case by speculating about what the region would be like without that presence. Some fear the departure of American military forces from East Asia would create a vacuum which other regional powers would seek to fill. The resulting uncertainty would seem to create a situation ripe for the emergence of a classic 'security

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<sup>6</sup> Nixon, Richard, *Seize the Moment* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992), p. 36.

dilemma' in which one country's (perhaps benign) efforts to enhance its security are seen by other countries as threatening to their own security.<sup>7</sup> Others suggest the strong American presence 'buffers' the region from its own historical animosities and concerns. For instance, Koreans remember the harsh Japanese rule earlier this century and various Southeast Asian states feel they have reason to view both China and Japan with a wary eye.<sup>8</sup> In this context, the United States-Japan security alliance eases the fears of many in East Asia to the extent they believe it will survive in the future.

While it may be a source of stability in the short-term, the long-term stability provided by the relationship is a more open question. Indeed, even now the relationship is under some strain. For more than two decades, the relationship between the United States and Japan has been the source of minor disputes, usually relating to trade. Increasingly, Japan has learned how to say 'no' to American demands, though some see this as a sign that the relationship is maturing rather than deteriorating.<sup>9</sup> These disputes can be particularly divisive because, although its influence in the region has declined relative to other powers, the United States often issues unilateral demands (in areas such as trade and human rights) as if it were the unquestioned power in the region.<sup>10</sup>

Whatever its benefits, I do not believe the relationship can last in the long-term as it is currently structured. While this will be discussed in greater detail later in this thesis, it is worth mentioning that the relationship is fundamentally based on the needs of the Cold

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<sup>7</sup> Kreisberg, Paul H., Daniel Y. Chiu, and Jerome H. Kahan, eds., *Threat Perceptions in Asia and the Role of the Major Powers* (Honolulu: The East-West Center, 1993), p. 1.

<sup>8</sup> McNaughton, p. 192.

<sup>9</sup> Ching, Frank, "A Partnership Under Strain," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 Mar 94, p. 33.

<sup>10</sup> Manning, Robert A., and Paula Stern, "The Myth of the Pacific Community," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 1994, p. 87.



War rather than the realities of the post-Cold War era. Specifically, the United States was willing and able to subordinate economic concerns and act as the ultimate guarantor of Japan's defense for the sake of security. However, the Cold War rationale for such a commitment is no longer clear without the threat from the Soviet Union. Furthermore, even if such a rationale existed, the affordability of such a commitment is an open question. In addition, while Japan has taken many steps over the past few decades to play a larger role in regional and global security issues, it still does not play a role commensurate with its economic position in the world.

### **C. SCENARIOS FOR THE FUTURE**

Given my premise that the security relationship is important to the stability of East Asia (and therefore in the interest of the United States), this thesis will examine various scenarios in which Japan and the United States might find themselves in the future. I acknowledge that this premise is the source of some debate. As will be discussed later, some argue the United States should transform its bilateral relationship with Japan (and its other bilateral relationships in Asia) into a multilateral security regime while others argue for terminating the relationship altogether. While this thesis is not specifically aimed toward resolving this debate, many of these issues will be addressed within it. My goal is to examine various scenarios with the intention of highlighting factors that tend to either strengthen or weaken the relationship. After a brief discussion of the international relations theory used in this thesis (Chapter II) and a review of United States-Japan security relations (Chapter III), I will consider these four scenarios.

First, the security relationship between the United States and Japan could come to an end if American troops are increasingly viewed as the 'policemen' of Asia or the 'cap in the bottle' of Japan without an identifiable benefit to match that role. As mentioned above, during the Cold War the United States was willing to subordinate economic concerns for the sake of security. I believe it will be difficult for the United States to do so in the future.

Second, the present security arrangement could be threatened if Japan assumes a military size and role commensurate with its political and economic position in East Asia. If Japan increases the size of its military, this could cloud the rationale for the presence of American military forces in Japan. Furthermore, some Japanese might begin to see American forces stationed in their country as an impediment to Japan becoming a 'normal' nation. Such changes would likely result from regional dynamics, such as the unification of the Korean Peninsula; conflict caused by a fragmented or 'weak' China; or the emergence of a regional trading bloc in East Asia.

Third, the emergence of China (or perhaps Russia) as the dominant military and economic power in East Asia could be threatening to the United States and Japan and reinvigorate their security alliance. China's efforts to maintain influence over border areas, such as the Korean Peninsula or Southeast Asia, could cause a great deal of uneasiness in the United States and Japan causing them to 'balance' against China.

Fourth, efforts to update the relationship could ensure its long-term survival. While the relationship has changed a great deal since its inception, more dramatic changes are necessary for the long-term. As mentioned before, the relationship would need to be

moved from the needs of the Cold War to the realities of the post-Cold War era. Assessing the purpose of the alliance (given the end of the Cold War) would be key to any effort to update it. In addition, the United States might consider the prospects for changing the bilateral relationship into a larger multilateral security regime in East Asia.

Various themes I will develop in these scenarios overlap. I will attempt to find a balance in which I present each scenario so that it can stand alone without repeating unnecessary details. All four scenarios predict various amounts of change in the relationship between the United States and Japan. I have hinted at some of the roots of these changes. However, I believe a great deal of insight is gained by viewing the relationship in slightly more abstract terms. Specifically, I believe international relations theory can offer 'systemic' explanations for some of the trends in the above scenarios. With this in mind, the next chapter introduces a theoretical backdrop that will be used to help explain various trends in the four scenarios I have outlined.



## II. AN ABSTRACT VIEW OF THE RELATIONSHIP

To better understand future scenarios in the security relationship between Japan and the United States, it is helpful to examine changes that have occurred (or would potentially occur in the scenarios) in the context of the larger international political system. For this reason, this thesis will include international relations theory from *War and Change in World Politics*, by Robert Gilpin. This theory will help to explain aspects of state behavior in times of change within the international political system as it relates to the four scenarios.

### A. THE REALIST APPROACH

While my views on the international political system are not as rigid or dogmatic as some, they definitely fall within the realist or neorealist school of thought. In short, international politics takes place within a more or less 'anarchic' system in which states are the primary actors. Viewing the international system in this fashion is important to my thesis because much of the analysis is conducted at a level where the state is the primary actor. In this system, states are ultimately unable to rely on others within the system to act on their behalf for their most basic objective--survival. As a result, states operate by the 'self-help principle,' which means that states pursue policies or goals deemed to be in their own interest.<sup>1</sup>

However, some international relations scholars view the realist perspective as outdated. For instance, they argue that economic interdependence has fundamentally

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<sup>1</sup> Waltz, Kenneth N., "Political Structures," in Keohane, Robert O., ed., *Neorealism and Its Critics* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1986), pp. 81-85.

changed the international political system. The rise of economic welfare as the most important concern of states means that they are no longer solely interested in pursuing their own narrow security interests. Furthermore, the emergence of multinational and transnational actors in the international system reduces the amount of anarchy within the system. Others argue that the arrival of the 'global village' has likewise changed the international system by providing a unified effort to combat global problems, such as overpopulation and environmental degradation, through the use of modern science and technology.<sup>2</sup> These views hold that the world is not as anarchic as it once was and that states are beginning to define their interests in larger terms than their own narrow self-interest.

In my view, while these trends may affect the international political system, they have not fundamentally changed how it operates. Though economic interdependence seems to be on the rise, states continue to assiduously pursue what they view as their own self-interest. In fact, as Chalmers Johnson points out, with the emergence of economically integrated regions two side effects have surfaced: "fear of the strongest partner and fear of being left out."<sup>3</sup> Whether it is the Philippines or Malaysia which fears being dominated by Indonesia in ASEAN or France uneasy about Germany dominating the European Union, states still seem to hold security concerns paramount.

Similarly, while the arrival of the 'global village' has highlighted the fact that states live in a much smaller world than in the past and face many of the same problems, it does

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<sup>2</sup> Such arguments can be found in the writing of Keohane, Robert O., and Joseph S. Nye, *Power and Interdependence--World Politics in Transition* (Boston: Little and Brown, 1977); and Inkeles, Alex, "The Emerging Social Structure of the World," *World Politics*, July 1975, pp. 467-495.

<sup>3</sup> Johnson, Chalmers, "Rethinking Asia," *The National Interest*, Summer 1993, p. 25.

not necessarily follow that states will choose to act together on these problems. The United Nations, perhaps the most developed organization intent on promoting peace and stability, has had a decidedly mixed record in recent years with regard to solving problems in areas such as Africa or the Balkans. Again, while it might be unwise to assert that these trends have not affected the international system, I do not believe they have disproved the basic tenets of the realist approach. Peter W. Rodman expressed it well when he wrote in the *National Review*:

The fashionable view that security concerns are obsolete, or have been replaced by economic and social concerns, is wildly premature. Ask the Central Europeans, who have just awakened from a sixty-year nightmare, are still situated between Russia and Germany, and are not persuaded that saving the ozone layer is their major national-security problem.<sup>4</sup>

Similar concerns could easily be found in East Asia in countries such as South Korea. In addition to the threat from North Korea, its security concerns include the fact that it is still situated between Japan and China. As is discussed in detail later in this thesis, those in China or on the Korean Peninsula who hope the security relationship between the United States and Japan will endure believe it is in their own *security* interest to have the United States in Japan. That some in East Asia feel insecure is a reflection of the fact that this is potentially a time of great change within the international system. That change, and the concerns of states as it occurs, is where we now turn our discussion.

## **B. CHANGE WITHIN THE INTERNATIONAL SYSTEM**

As mentioned before, the particular approach used in this thesis is adapted from the theory of Robert Gilpin. Gilpin's work is especially well-suited for my scenarios

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<sup>4</sup> Rodman, Peter W., "Points of Order," *National Review*, 1 May 1995, p. 40.

because it addresses the behavior of the two main actors in my thesis--the United States and Japan. More importantly, I believe it does an excellent job of explaining change within the international system. With regard to the United States, Gilpin examines hegemonic states (he uses the term 'dominant state' interchangeably) that are in the process of relative decline and focuses on what actions they take to maintain control over the system. With regard to Japan, he examines rising powers and the actions they take to change the rules of the international system to match the new distribution of power.

Ultimately, Gilpin's theory rests on five assumptions about the behavior of states. The assumptions are based on the notion that states (as the primary actors in the system) make cost-benefit calculations about what course of action best suits their self-interest within the international system. First, according to Gilpin's definition, stability within the international system (i.e., a state of equilibrium) exists when no state believes it is profitable to attempt to change the system. The states in the system are not necessarily pleased with their position, but they have come to the conclusion that they lack the means to change it or to do so would be too expensive. For this reason, Gilpin argues that periods of stability throughout history occurred when a clear hierarchy existed (though they were by no means egalitarian in nature).

Second, states attempt to change the international system only when the expected benefits exceed the expected costs (i.e., if there is an expected net gain). Gilpin asserts that not only rising powers seek change, "both potential gainers and losers from ongoing developments in an international system" may seek change.<sup>5</sup> In other words, a state may

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<sup>5</sup> Gilpin Robert, *War and Change in World Politics* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1981), p. 52.



change the system to either increase its benefits or decrease its costs. Furthermore, efforts by states to change the system to their benefit do not always go as planned. Efforts to change the system have often benefited third parties previously on the 'periphery' of the international system. Over the long-term, Gilpin believes economic growth and demographic change are the most important factors in forcing change within the international system. However, the "triggering mechanisms" for this change are based on technological, military, or economic changes which ultimately benefit or harm the position of various states within the system.

Third, states seek to change the international system through "territorial, political, and economic expansion until the marginal costs of further change are equal to or greater than the marginal benefits."<sup>6</sup> An important trend in the modern era is the rise of states into hegemonic powers which assume the cost of supplying many 'public goods' for the international system (i.e. stability) in exchange for increased 'revenue.' These hegemonic powers did so because it was in their best interest, but these actions often benefited other lesser powers in the system as well. Eventually, further expansion (territorial, political, or economical) reaches a point of diminishing returns. Expansion becomes increasingly expensive because of several "countervailing forces." Gilpin's first countervailing force is natural barriers and the loss-of-strength gradient. Natural barriers include factors such as topography, soil fertility, and climate, while loss-of-strength gradient refers to "the degree to which (a state's) military and political power diminishes" as it moves away from its own territory.<sup>7</sup> The "generation of opposing power" is another force which makes expansion

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<sup>6</sup> Ibid., p. 106.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid., p. 56.

more costly. History is full of examples of several smaller powers allying themselves to 'balance' against an expansionist power. Another factor which decreases the profitability of further expansion results from states growing past their "optimum size." Gilpin argues that this factor is often associated with the increased administrative cost (within a hegemonic or dominant state) caused by a bureaucracy that grows more quickly than expansion and an increase in the size of the ruling coalition (and the resulting efforts to satisfy various coalition members). The result is that the dominant power grows so large that it is difficult to control and difficult to focus the attention of the state on important issues. Finally, expansion is inhibited by the "internal transformations" within the hegemonic state. These transformations are highlighted in the differences within society during its initial period of growth and later periods after the main surge of growth occurs. In the periods after its initial growth, the state becomes less vibrant, hard-working, and innovative--the virtues which led to the initial successful expansion. In the later periods, much of the society loses its initial fervor and becomes more concerned with maintaining its "present privileges than in risking their loss in further efforts to increase wealth and power." Furthermore, society's desire to maintain the status quo (or more specifically, its comfortable 'standard of living') makes it "less willing to pay the costs in blood, political instability, or economic dislocation that may be associated with political and economic expansion."<sup>8</sup>

Gilpin's fourth assumption is that, "once an equilibrium between the costs and benefits of further change and expansion is reached, the tendency is for the economic costs of maintaining the status quo to rise faster than the economic capacity to support the

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<sup>8</sup> Ibid., pp. 152-154.

status quo.”<sup>9</sup> Many of the costs expended by the hegemonic power to maintain the system (i.e., peace or stability) are not necessarily productive investments and actually become a “drain on the economy” of that state. Gilpin suggests that within hegemonic states, “internal and external changes increase consumption and the cost of protection and production” and ultimately lead to a severe financial crisis. Gilpin points to a number of internal changes which lead to political conflict over the allocation of the state’s resources: an eroding industrial base which is increasingly based on services; increased cost of military technology; high private and public consumption rates; and the “corrupting effects of affluence and preeminence.”<sup>10</sup> Gilpin also points to external factors which plague dominant powers. First, he mentions the increased cost of dominating the international system. The rise of other states, which have often benefited from the public goods provided by the dominant power without paying a ‘fair share,’ make it increasingly difficult for the dominant power to maintain its position at the top of the international system. The net result is an alteration in the distribution of power within the international system. Maintaining the status quo in the system becomes more expensive than the economic benefits derived from the status quo. Another external factor is the diffusion of technology to other states in the system. By diffusing military and economic technology to other states, the hegemon creates the powers that begin to challenge its position within the international system. These rising powers benefit from this situation because, like the hegemon, they enjoy public goods (such as stability) as well technology diffused from the hegemon. However, unlike the hegemon, they are (as yet) free from the internal and

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., p. 156.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., pp. 159-166.

external factors (mentioned above) which constrain the expansion of their position within the system. The net result is a change in the distribution of power within the international system.

Gilpin's fifth assumption is that if disequilibrium in the system is not resolved, then the system will be changed to reflect this new redistribution of power. In this situation, a rising power (or powers) might begin to see the costs of changing the system as affordable in relation to the expected gains change would bring. On the other hand, "From the perspective of dominant powers, the costs of maintaining the international status quo have increased, producing a serious discrepancy between one's power and one's commitments."<sup>11</sup> As the rising power makes a bid to change the system to benefit itself, the hegemonic power can either increase the resources it devotes to maintaining control over the system or it can attempt to reduce its existing commitments without renouncing its position in the system. Gilpin mentions various courses of action open to the hegemon in this scenario: increase taxation domestically; exact tribute abroad; territorial conquest; eliminate the rising power; or retrenchment. While it is not practical to discuss them in detail here (and some will be discussed later in this thesis), it is important to note that Gilpin considers this scenario the point in which war is most likely to occur. This is because the structure and rules of the system do not accurately reflect the distribution of power within the system. Conflict is likely because rising powers believe the system should better reflect their new status while the dominant power (or the many groups with vested interests within that power) is reluctant to give up its position in the system.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., pp. 186-187.

As previously stated, many of Gilpin's assumptions and themes will be brought into the scenarios contained in this thesis. However, before discussing future scenarios it is important to understand the history of the security relationship between the United States and Japan and how it has evolved in the past few decades. Therefore, the next chapter will discuss the history of that relationship from the end of the Second World War to present.



### III. UNITED STATES-JAPAN SECURITY RELATIONS: 1945 TO PRESENT

Before examining future scenarios for the security relationship between the United States and Japan, a review of the relationship is necessary to put the scenarios in the proper context. The security relationship is one of the more interesting developments of the Cold War and remains something of a paradox in the post-Cold War era. While Japan's security is ultimately guaranteed by the United States, it is also in competition with the United States in economic terms. This chapter will review the security relationship between the United States and Japan from the end of the Second World War to present and highlight change as well as continuity in the relationship.

Much of this review will focus on Japan's security policy during the Cold War because this period serves as a backdrop for a greater part of the relationship. In addition, the Cold War brought about a set of circumstances which still define the basic structure of the security relationship today. When considering Japan's role in the Cold War, it is important to note that the roots of the Cold War are European, not Asian. Japan's involvement in the Cold War was not because of any fundamental disagreement with the Soviet Union. Instead, Japan's involvement emerged by virtue of the fact that it was occupied by the United States at the end of the Second World War. This is not to say Japan's role was insignificant. Japan, like many other countries, played an important part in the "vigilant containment of Russian expansive tendencies" called for by George Kennan when it became clear the United States and the Soviet Union would not remain allies after the Second World War.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "The Sources of Soviet Conduct," *Foreign Affairs*, July 1947, pp. 566-582.

It is also important to understand the role of the military in Japan prior to the American occupation as this has relevance to Japanese defense policy during the Cold War. Simply stated, before the end of the Second World War, there was little effective control of the military by the civilian leadership in Japan. The roots of this predicament are too complex to be fully addressed here but some points need to be made about how Japanese society viewed the military at the time. First, prior to the Second World War, Japan had no tradition of civilian control of the military as is commonplace in many Western countries. In fact, military-style rule had a well-established history. Second, many citizens were inclined to hold the military in much higher regard than those they saw as "rich industrialist and self-seeking politicians."<sup>2</sup> Third, this was a period filled with nationalistic fervor in which Japan was beginning to 'feel its oats' in terms of being a powerful nation.

Within the Japanese military, notably young Army officers, there were elements that believed the strength of the military was its spiritual power. "The products of the Army Academy learned to rely on *seishin-shugi*, the victory of spirit over the material, and to ignore logical thought."<sup>3</sup> This led to an ethos which valued action-oriented leadership. Leadership did not necessarily have to be rational, it only had to further the perceived goals of the planners. These elements advocated and carried out all manner of activities (ostensibly in the interest of Imperial Japan) that were often not sanctioned by the civilian leaders of Japan. While some civilian leaders agreed with the activities of these military officers, on occasion Japan was pushed in directions its civilian leaders had never intended.

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<sup>2</sup> Reischauer, Edwin O., *Japan: The Story of a Nation* (New York: McGraw-Hill Publishing Company, 1990), p. 156.

<sup>3</sup> van Wolferen, Karel, *The Enigma of Japanese Power* (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), p. 288.



In many cases, the Japanese Army established "foreign policy through faits accomplis" and reduced the role of the civilian government to that of an "unhappy apologist" to the world. The seizure of Manchuria in 1931 and the full-scale attack on China in 1937 exemplify this conduct. Civilian leaders made some efforts to 'rein-in' the military but it was obvious the civilian leadership did not have the mechanisms to do so. The Imperial Army was able to avoid such efforts, in large part, because the constitution stipulated that the army reported directly to the emperor, not the civilian leaders.<sup>4</sup> As will be discussed next, these events had far-reaching implications for the relationship between the United States and Japan during the Occupation, the Cold War, and the present day.

#### **A. EARLY OCCUPATION PERIOD**

Given this history of militarism and aggression, many of the security policies early in the occupation were designed to prevent such occurrences in the future. China and Korea had been victims of Japanese aggression and were vocal in their concern about Japan's future role in Asia. As a result, the initial American policy during the occupation aimed to keep Japan docile so as to assuage the fears of Japan's neighbors (as well as American fears). Additionally, Kenneth Pyle argues that General Douglas MacArthur believed the Japanese had an historically rooted militarism which had to be removed through reforms. At the time, MacArthur was optimistic about the trends toward collective security and was content to maintain a disarmed Japan. As a result, he ensured the new constitution in Japan contained language toward that end. Article 9 states in part, "war as a sovereign right of the nation is abolished. Japan renounces it as an

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<sup>4</sup> Reischauer, pp. 156-161.

instrumentality for settling its disputes.”<sup>5</sup> In the interest of keeping Japan docile, a large number of American troops were maintained in Japan as the “institutional corollary” to Article 9.<sup>6</sup>

The new constitution had other features aimed at preventing past abuses. Article 66 mandated that cabinet members in Japan would be civilian. This article was included at the insistence of the Far Eastern Commission (FEC), an allied committee to oversee the occupation. China, perhaps in acknowledgment of the Japanese ability to tolerate great differences between the ideal and practice, was concerned that Japan would pay ‘lip service’ to disarmament. China accused Japan of planning “to deceive the world into thinking that Japan was absolutely renouncing military forces when actually they planned to rearm the country using the loopholes created by the textual changes in the constitution.”<sup>7</sup> Article 66 also made it clear the Prime Minister was to be the Commander-in-Chief of military forces instead of the emperor. In addition, the Constitution specifically outlawed a separate military justice system (Article 76) and has been interpreted to preclude conscription (Article 18).<sup>8</sup>

## **B. EARLY COLD WAR PERIOD**

Americans associate various events which signaled the coming of a cold war with the Soviet Union: Churchill’s ‘Iron Curtain’ speech, George Kennan’s ‘Mr. X’ article, or the Berlin Airlift. In East Asia, the bellwether event was the Communist victory in China

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<sup>5</sup> Pyle, Kenneth, *The Japanese Question* (Washington DC: American Enterprise Institute, 1992), pp. 8-9.

<sup>6</sup> Johnson, Chalmers, “Japan in Search of a ‘Normal’ Role,” *Daedalus*, Fall 1992, pp. 3-4.

<sup>7</sup> Pyle, pp. 10-11.

<sup>8</sup> Gow, Ian, “Civilian Control of the Military in Postwar Japan,” in Matthews, Ron, and Matsuyama Keisuke, eds., *Japan’s Military Renaissance?* (New York: St. Martin’s Press, 1993), p. 59.

in 1949. Though the roots of the Cold War were European, this event made it clear to some that Communism would need to be 'contained.' The alliance of the Soviet Union and China must have seemed daunting to many in the United States, especially in light of the severe demobilization of the American military after the Second World War.

In the early days of the occupation, there was little interest in maintaining anything that resembled a Japanese military. However, the American view of Japan (and its role in Asia) changed during the occupation when it became obvious that the United States was moving toward a policy of containing Communism. In this context, the realization that China had been 'lost' caused American priorities in Japan to change dramatically. Many Japanese refer to this change in priorities as a "reverse course" because American efforts shifted from "democratizing" Japan to making it an integral part of containing Communism in the region. Evidence of this shift was the 'depurging' of many officials who had a role in Japan's activities prior to surrender and occupation in 1945. Despite their past activities, they appealed to the United States because they had a common concern over leftist elements in Japan and were "rabid anti-Communists" (perhaps conveniently).<sup>9</sup>

The outbreak of the Korean War in 1950 prompted the formation of the 75,000-man Police Reserve Force (and later an 8000-man maritime force) to replace American military forces deploying to Korea. This force later evolved into the National Safety Forces and eventually the Japanese Self-Defense Forces (SDF).<sup>10</sup> With this nascent

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<sup>9</sup> Johnson, Chalmers, "The People Who Invented the Mechanical Nightingale," *Daedalus*, Summer 1990, pp. 75-76.

<sup>10</sup> Watanabe, Akio, "Japan's Postwar Constitution and Its Implications for Defence Policy: A Fresh Interpretation," in Matthews and Matsuyama, p. 41.

Japanese military, the United States clearly set out to make 'civilian control of the military' a defining concept of postwar Japan. The United States was thinking in these terms even before the creation of any military forces in Japan. Shortly after the war, officials in Washington D.C. sent instructions to MacArthur that stressed the importance of establishing civilian control over the military.<sup>11</sup> Though they were taken at the direction of the United States, many Japanese greeted these policies enthusiastically because of the problems experienced with the military prior to the end of the Second World War.<sup>12</sup> In 1951, President Harry S Truman showed the extent to which Americans valued the concept of civilian control when he relieved General MacArthur during the Korean War. Harrison Holland summarizes the effect of this event on Japan:

The reactions to Truman's dramatic and sudden action were those of bewilderment and astonishment that an unprepossessing civilian in Washington, even though President, could by one stroke of a pen fire a man who had come to represent to the Japanese people benign Authority and Power. This, it began to dawn on many in Japan, was 'civilian control.'<sup>13</sup>

Holland's observation is salient because MacArthur's removal showed Japan's civilian leaders the extent of control they wished to exercise over their own military. In fact, armed with the constitutional provisions mentioned above, the Japanese military was kept on a much shorter 'leash' than the United States military. However, it would be inaccurate to suggest this course of events resulted merely from constitutional changes in Japan. Other changes ultimately played a larger role. Next, I will discuss those changes

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<sup>11</sup> Pyle, p. 9.

<sup>12</sup> Johnson, "The People Who Invented the Mechanical Nightingale," pp. 74-75.

<sup>13</sup> Holland, Harrison M., *Managing Defense: Japan's Dilemma* (Lanham MD: University Press of America, 1988), p. 17.

which fundamentally altered the nature of the relationship between Japan's military and its civilian masters.

### C. POLITICAL AND BUREAUCRATIC CONSTRAINTS

Up to this point, only constitutional constraints on the military have been discussed. In fact, there have been strong political and bureaucratic constraints as well. However, before studying these constraints, it is instructive to examine the concept of 'civilian control' in more detail. In *The Soldier and the State*, Samuel P. Huntington defines two methods for minimizing the power of the military: through subjective control and through objective control. Huntington defines subjective control as the ability of some civilian element in the government to maximize its power relative to the military's power. Subjective control assumes that the military will be politically involved. To neutralize the power of the military in the political sphere, the civilian elements of the state control the military by "civilianizing" the military or making it a "mirror of the state."

Objective control of the military is essentially the opposite of subjective control. Objective control seeks to exclude the military from political activities by "militarizing the military" and turning it into a "tool of the state." Furthermore, Huntington argues that objective control of the military can only be accomplished with the emergence of a military profession.<sup>14</sup> Huntington also mentions that in some cases there is no civilian control and this probably best describes the situation in Japan prior to the Occupation. At best, elements in Japan were struggling to enforce subjective control of the military. However, in the Cold War period, Japan developed various political and bureaucratic controls that

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<sup>14</sup> Huntington, Samuel P., *The Soldier and the State* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1957), pp. 83-85

provide objective control of the military (albeit, this control lies more with the bureaucracy than the prime minister).

Japan has controlled the military by intentionally keeping the Japanese Defense Agency (JDA) weak so as to not attract high-caliber politicians or bureaucrats. The JDA does not have a cabinet representative and its designation as an agency instead of a ministry relegates it to a position of "secondary state agency."<sup>15</sup> However, the controls go beyond whether or not the JDA has a representative in the cabinet. For instance, control is exerted by having bureaucrats borrowed from other ministries serve in key posts within the JDA. Bureaucrats from the Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI), the Ministry of Finance (MOF), or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) are seconded to key positions (in the Internal Bureaus) in the Japanese Defense Agency. These bureaucrats usually spend two or three years in the JDA before returning to their own ministries or retiring. Some seconded bureaucrats have risen to the highest position in the JDA, the administrative vice-minister. These three ministries dominate many key positions in the JDA through bureaucratic maneuvering. Such moves are commonly supported by military leaders in the Self-Defense Forces who often prefer dealing with seconded officials because they view them as more powerful than career JDA officials.<sup>16</sup>

An interesting aspect of seconding bureaucrats is how this affects decisionmaking within the JDA. These three ministries often compete for influence over JDA policy to serve their own interests. For instance, MOFA may be interested in increasing defense spending to maintain good relations with the United States. On the other hand, MOF

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<sup>15</sup> Chinworth, Michael, *Inside Japan's Defense* (New York: Brassey's Inc., 1992), p. 2.

<sup>16</sup> Holland, pp. 17-19.

might oppose the spending because it believes such a course of action would harm the Japanese economy. In the meantime, MITI might have a third view toward military spending which is predisposed toward investing in areas with potential for growth in dual-use industries. None of these motives are necessarily good or bad in themselves and similar scheming probably takes place in comparable ministries around the world. However, what seems to be an inhibiting factor is that there is no strong effort to reconcile these competing interests or prioritize them in terms of what is important for the defense of Japan. This is difficult because of the weak position of the JDA vis-à-vis the ministries as well as the relative weakness of Japanese political leaders (with the possible exception of some highly politicized issues in areas such as weapons procurement or the defense budget on which the bureaucrats may defer to politicians).<sup>17</sup>

With seconded bureaucrats dominating many key positions, the career track for JDA bureaucrats is somewhat limited. In a society where prestige is so important, it must be difficult to recruit top college graduates into the JDA which suffers from the taint of prewar events.<sup>18</sup> However, the JDA has taken efforts to improve its career track. For instance, it sends some of its most promising bureaucrats to serve in prestigious ministries to get valuable experience and make important contacts.<sup>19</sup> Serving in an appointed position at the JDA does not summarily end a non-career individual's political career. The

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<sup>17</sup> Chinworth, pp. 1-5. Perhaps a good example of this occurred in December 1986 when a controversy arose regarding a JDA request for the procurement of additional Patriot surface-to-air missiles which would have placed the defense budget in excess of one percent of Japan's gross national product (a ceiling self-imposed by Japanese leaders in the 1970s which came to symbolize Japan's defensive military posture). On this occasion, Prime Minister Nakasone interceded and approved the additional spending which had been disputed at lower levels of government. (Chinworth, p. 23; Pyle, pp. 102-103).

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., p. 5.

<sup>19</sup> Holland, p. 19.

fact that Nakasone Yasuhiro served as the Director-General of the JDA, and went on to become prime minister, may be evidence that the prestige of the JDA is on the rise.<sup>20</sup>

It is also interesting to note that while it exists in name, the SDF has no genuine high-profile position like the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff in the United States. Just the suggestion that uniformed officers give testimony before the Diet has created controversy.<sup>21</sup> In July 1978, Ground Self-Defense Forces (GSDF) Chief of Staff Kurisu Hiromi was dismissed after highlighting inadequate mechanisms for the use of military forces in the event of an invasion. Kurisu suggested that if Japan were being invaded, he might not wait for permission to repel hostile forces as is technically required.<sup>22</sup> Obviously, the Japanese government has kept its military on a very 'short leash.' Part of the reason it has been able to do so relates to the role it played during the Cold War. Essentially, Japan's defense policy was to be the 'younger brother' to the United States.

This role as the 'younger brother' evolved out of the early American intention to maintain a disarmed Japan. Later, with the advent of the containment strategy, the United States attempted to remilitarize Japan but these efforts were vigorously opposed by Prime Minister Yoshida Shigeru. Despite this, the United States obtained the right to station troops in Japan and committed to defending it in the United States-Japan Mutual Security Treaty (MST) of 1952. It is important to note that while the United States committed to defend Japan in the event of an attack, Japan did not make any reciprocal pledge. In

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<sup>20</sup> Gow, p. 61.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., p. 59.

<sup>22</sup> Keddell, Joseph P., *The Politics of Defense in Japan* (Armonk NY: M.E. Sharpe, 1993), p. 71.



addition, until the treaty was changed in 1960, the United States reserved the right to intervene in domestic disturbances in Japan.<sup>23</sup>

As the relationship evolved, so did Japan's core policy of the Cold War era--the Yoshida Doctrine. The Yoshida Doctrine had three tenets. First, the economic rehabilitation of Japan was the primary national goal which required a great deal of political-economic cooperation with the United States. Second, Japan should maintain only a limited defensive capability and avoid international strategic issues that would sap the energy of the Japanese and promote divisive issues domestically. Third, the United States would provide for the security of Japan in exchange for the right to base military forces in Japan.<sup>24</sup>

In retrospect, this may not have been an ideal arrangement, but at the time the United States and Japan both got what they wanted. If the United States was the domineering 'elder brother,' inclined to dictate terms, surely Japan played the role of 'younger brother' for all it was worth. Prime Minister Yoshida was perhaps one of the most shrewd politicians in recent Japanese history. He (and those who followed him) managed to maintain an "economics-first policy" which depended on the American security guarantee while fending off all attempts to engage Japan in any proposed collective security arrangements.<sup>25</sup> In 1950, the United States was interested in involving Japan in a regional defense effort similar to what was evolving in Europe with West Germany. Yoshida argued that such a course would spell economic ruin for Japan and engender social unrest that would make the country ripe for Communist advances.

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., p. 40.

<sup>24</sup> Pyle, p. 25.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., p. 4.

Indeed, as Kenneth Pyle points out, Yoshida left little to chance on this occasion. He secretly encouraged the leadership of the Socialist party to "whip up anti-rearmament demonstrations and campaigns" during the time he was negotiating with John Foster Dulles on this issue.<sup>26</sup> In a much cited conversation with his young aide, Miyazawa Kiichi (a future prime minister), Yoshida displayed his keen sense that a rearmed Japan caused no small amount of consternation in various countries and his awareness of the good deal Japan was receiving:

the day (for rearmament) will come naturally when our livelihood recovers. It may sound devious, but let the Americans handle (our security) until then. It is indeed our Heaven-bestowed good fortune that the Constitution bans arms. If the Americans complain, the Constitution gives us a perfect justification. The politicians who want to amend it are fools.<sup>27</sup>

An excellent example of how Japan capitalized under the circumstances was Yoshida's response to the American request that Japan contribute militarily to efforts in the Korean War. Again, behind the shield of Article 9 (and in keeping with the Yoshida Doctrine), he declined to send troops to the aid of South Korea yet reaped a huge economic benefit from the war in defense procurements. In retrospect, it is easy to see the maneuvers of Yoshida as opportunistic, yet there was a kernel of truth in some of his arguments. Setting aside the notion of equitable burdensharing, would Japan have been able to recover economically if it also had to rearm? How would a rearmed Japan have affected the stability of East Asia in the 1950s? The argument can be made that while Japan got what it wanted, so did the United States. While the United States was not able

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 23-24.

<sup>27</sup> Quoted in Pyle, p. 26.

to prevail upon Japan in every occasion, it was able to dictate terms often enough and every Japanese refusal seemed to have a price upon which the United States capitalized.<sup>28</sup>

#### **D. COLD WAR CHANGES IN DEFENSE POLICY**

While Japan's defense policy during the Cold War had a great deal of continuity, in terms of playing the role of the "younger brother," it was not static. There were various reasons for the changes in defense policy. Some changes resulted from Japan's economic success and the subsequent changes in how the Japanese viewed themselves and their role in the world. Other changes were driven by the American desire that Japan play a larger role in its own security. Japan's role in the world and the defense policy to accompany that role were (and continue to be) a subject of considerable debate. There were a wide range of views on the proper defense policy for Japan. On the left, some questioned the legality of the SDF and advocated total disarmament. On the right, some advocated a fully rearmed Japan with a nuclear capability. In the middle of this spectrum, Japanese politicians carefully made "incremental changes" to defense policy in which military capabilities were increased within the framework of an American security guarantee.<sup>29</sup>

The roots of this "ideological polarization" over defense policy are worth noting. First, with the outbreak of the Cold War, defense policy became caught up in broader (and more fundamental) disagreements over how Japanese society and its political system should be structured. In the early days of the Cold War, finding a middle course between those who wanted a capitalist democracy and those who espoused socialism or communism was difficult on a variety of issues, including defense. Second, given Japanese

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<sup>28</sup> Pyle, pp. 26-27.

<sup>29</sup> Keddell, p. 5.

history in the years before the Occupation, an increased role for the military carried a great deal of 'baggage' that extended even to areas such as education: "Efforts by the conservatives to instill patriotism in young Japanese by stressing moral education evoked memories of wartime indoctrination." Some may have been alarmed in light of the type of people who were being 'depurged' and finding their way back into the system in Japan. Third, the military was the target of a great deal of mistrust because of the circumstances under which it was formed in the postwar era. The National Police Reserve was created to replace American troops on their way to Korea with little input from the Japanese government. Furthermore, the creation of this police force came on the heels of a "crackdown," by Occupation authorities, on various leftist and union groups.<sup>30</sup> The urge of the United States to suppress leftist groups is understandable given the external influence on these groups by Communist elements (such as Comintern) which encouraged a more radical stance at the time of the Korean War.<sup>31</sup> However, this led many on the left to view this police force and the resulting military as their natural enemy.

Often the debate on Japan's defense policy was framed within the context of what was constitutionally legal. This debate revolved around two basic questions. First, are the Self-Defense Forces legal? Second, what are the limits of self-defense? Generally, most in Japan agree that a self-defense force is legal, but there is less agreement on what constitutes self-defense. The 'minimalist' approach holds that while self-defense is legal, the mechanisms of that defense (such as the SDF) are subject to severe regulation. In addition, this school of thought defines the concept of self-defense as those actions

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., pp. 31-32.

<sup>31</sup> Berton, Peter, "The Japan Communist Party: The 'Lovable' Party," in Ronald J. Hrebennar, ed., *The Japanese Party System* (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1992), p. 118.

necessary to protect Japan from a direct threat. These groups do not view participation in multilateral or other efforts outside Japan as legitimate. This approach tended to view the American military (and their SDF allies) as an unnecessary 'magnet' for the attention of the Soviet forces in the region. In addition, the minimalist approach was supported by extreme as well as mainstream pacifist elements in Japan which had a strong influence on the debate. On the other hand, the 'maximalist' approach supports a much broader definition of what constitutes self-defense. This approach is much less tied geographically to the Japanese Islands. Rather, Japanese forces should support the American forces stationed in Japan as long as they are engaged in activities in support of the Japan-United States Security Treaty.<sup>32</sup>

The defense debate continued as Japan experienced economic success that produced fundamental changes within Japanese society. In the immediate postwar period, Japanese 'progressives' fully embraced the changes of the 'reform period.' These progressives led an offensive against many traditional Japanese institutions and beliefs they thought were the root cause of Japan's past mistakes:

Progressives held that prewar nationalism, which had been built on extraordinary claims of the collectivist ethic, the Japanese family-state, and the emperor system, had led them astray. Particularism had blinded them to their real self-interest, had overcome their best instincts, and had reduced them to international outcasts<sup>33</sup>

However, in the decades that followed, the claims of progressive elements were undermined by economic success and the increasing affluence in Japanese society. Japan was increasingly held up as a 'success story.' Other events played a subtle role in

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<sup>32</sup> Watanabe, pp. 44-45.

<sup>33</sup> Pyle, p. 45.

changing how the Japanese viewed themselves, such as Japan's arrival on the world scene in the 1964 Olympics and the 1970 World's Fair in Osaka. Both events were important in that they showed the world how far Japan had come since the dark days of the 1930s and 1940s.

In the early 1970s some in Japan began to call for a foreign policy independent of the United States. Many of these calls for autonomy were pushed along after incidents such as the 1969 summit between President Richard Nixon and Prime Minister Sato Eisaku. After American officials mistakenly believed Sato pledged to implement restraints in textile exports, the United States eventually forced Japan to accept the 'voluntary' restraints. While the United States got its way, it was significant in that Japan had forcefully said 'no' to American demands. It also hinted that future economic competition between the two countries would lead to minor policy issues dominating a summit agenda (as well as interaction between the governments at other levels). The 'Nixon Shocks' that followed in the summer of 1971, the announcement of President Nixon's intention to travel to China and removing the dollar from the gold standard, further illustrated to some Japanese the need to pursue its own foreign policy.<sup>34</sup>

The desire of the United States that its Asian allies contribute more to their own defense led to other changes in Japanese defense policy. This concept was put forward in 1971 by President Nixon. In what became known as the 'Nixon Doctrine' (also Guam Doctrine), Asian allies were asked to take a larger role in containing Communism in the region. Broadly, the Nixon Doctrine assured allies that they would continue to benefit

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<sup>34</sup> Shinichi, Kitaoka, "Diplomacy and the Military in Showa Japan," *Daedalus*, Summer 1990, pp. 169- 170.

from an American 'nuclear umbrella' and could count on American naval and air assets if needed. However, the United States wanted to reduce the number of ground troops in the region.

Earlier, with heavy commitments during the Vietnam War, the United States had again attempted to involve Japan in regional security. Despite American pressure and hints of returning Okinawa, Japan again rebuffed such advances. However, one clear result of the Vietnam War was a dramatic decrease in the American military presence in Asia. Considering the circumstances in which the United States left Vietnam, this undermined the faith of some in Japan who believed their security was inevitably tied to the United States. These same individuals became more concerned about American resolve in Asia when President Jimmy Carter proposed withdrawing ground forces from Korea. Though this idea was later shelved, it highlighted how important American forces were to the stability of Asia in the eyes of many Japanese and forced them to consider a reduced United States presence in the region. Many did not like what they saw in the buildup of Soviet forces at the time (especially when the Soviets showed their willingness to take action in places like Afghanistan in 1979).<sup>35</sup> In the 1980s, Japan expanded sea-lane defense to 1000 miles (at the urging of the United States). This was implicitly to counter increased Soviet Navy activities in the area though Japan could not explicitly commit to much more than the defense of its home islands because of domestic pressure.<sup>36</sup>

Other changes were the result of Japan exploring how it could increase its own security within the existing domestic and regional constraints. The oil embargo in 1973

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<sup>35</sup> Keddel, p. 67.

<sup>36</sup> Arase, David, "New Directions in Japanese Security Policy," *Contemporary Security Policy*, August 1994, pp. 44-45.

was a catalyst for such efforts. It showed that the traditional passive stance Japan had taken internationally might not benefit Japan's long-term interests.<sup>37</sup> A good example of these changes was Japan's concept of comprehensive security introduced in 1980 under Prime Minister Ohira. It was Japan's concept of comprehensive security in that it stressed the role of non-military efforts to a greater degree than comprehensive security programs in other countries.

Comprehensive security called for the coordinated application of economic, political, and military measures at three levels: the global level; within selected groupings of countries; and in national self-help efforts. Key security objectives identified at each were: at the global level, arms control, better North-South relations, and free trade; at the intermediate level, maintenance of good relations with political allies and key economic partners; and at the national self-help level, military defense as well as economic productivity and export competitiveness.<sup>38</sup>

By the 1980s, Japan had come full circle from the progressive argument of the late 1940s and 1950s. Not only was Japan's economy a success, but its rapid economic growth was frequently described by foreigners as being the result of unique cultural advantages. Economic success engendered a revival in national pride. At the same time, some Japanese looked at the United States and were disillusioned by what they saw. The failure in Vietnam, the Watergate scandal, the humiliation of American hostages being taken in Iran, and poverty and crime levels unknown in Japan, all had a bearing on how the Japanese viewed the United States.<sup>39</sup> This view probably has its roots in the change in relative strength between the two countries. In other words, many of the problems

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<sup>37</sup> Wakaizumi, Kei, "Consensus in Japan," *Foreign Policy*, Summer 1977, pp. 168-169.

<sup>38</sup> Arase, p. 45.

<sup>39</sup> Pyle, pp. 42-51.



Japanese saw in the United States had been present all along, but they had little time to notice them in the early postwar period as their attention was focused on rebuilding Japan. These were flaws that the awestruck 'younger brother' had not noticed until economic success put it on a more equal footing with 'elder brother.'

The rise of nationalism was also an important factor in how Japan's view of itself changed. Nationalism was lifted with the rising tide of optimism and national pride that resulted from Japan's economic successes. Of course, nationalism never really disappeared in Japan. Like many countries, nationalist sentiment rose and fell at various times. It is important to note that different groups in Japan held different perspectives on the revival of nationalism. Some Japanese viewed nationalism as a dangerous element capable of producing the militarism found in Japan prior to the Second World War. Others used nationalism to voice their displeasure at Japan's role in the world (or lack thereof) in the Cold War period. Yoshida faced a great deal of hostility and resentment for the role in which he cast Japan. Some believed, despite the economic benefits, the Yoshida Doctrine cost too much in terms of Japan's self-esteem. The fact that Japan had to rely on another country for its defense was particularly distasteful to some (even Yoshida later expressed some regrets in this area).<sup>40</sup>

Indicative of this sentiment was the attitude of some nationalists that held up Japan's success in exploiting technology as proof "Japan could play an independent role in international politics." Some nationalists confidently claimed technology could help Japan rule supreme in international politics. Ito Jun talked of launching satellites that could track American and Soviet nuclear submarines which would give Japan the upper hand in

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., pp. 58-59.

dealing with those two countries or allow Japan to mediate between the two.<sup>41</sup> Ishihara Shintaro, in *The Japan That Can Say No*, similarly outlined how technology would free Japan from its “dependence and deference” toward the United States. Like Ito, he saw a way for technology to neutralize the superpowers:

It should come as a pleasure for us Japanese, who alone have experienced the tragedy of a nuclear holocaust and who have pledged never to use nuclear weapons, to find that we are attaining a position where we can render the superpowers’ nuclear warheads harmless by holding back the semiconductors they depend on. What could be a more fitting revenge for Hiroshima?<sup>42</sup>

The efforts of Prime Minister Nakasone also sought to increase Japan’s security without disavowing the existing security construct. Nakasone increased defense spending above the one percent of gross national product ceiling placed on it by political leaders years earlier. More importantly, Nakasone sought to build a “world-class defensive capability” in Japan.<sup>43</sup> Though it was a time of austerity in domestic spending, during Nakasone’s tenure Japan’s military budget emerged as the third largest in the world.<sup>44</sup>

Despite this increased defense capability, many in Japan probably did not believe this would mean a fundamental change in Japan’s security relationship with the United States. After all, there were no signs on the horizon which indicated a radical departure from the Cold War security paradigm. It is important to note the Japanese frame of mind in the waning days of the Cold War. While Japan expected the United States to be the primary world power in the foreseeable future, it seemed obvious that American influence

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<sup>41</sup> Ibid., p. 61.

<sup>42</sup> Quoted in Pyle, p. 62.

<sup>43</sup> Morse, Ronald A., “Japan’s Drive to Pre-eminence,” *Foreign Policy*, Winter 1987-88, p. 18.

<sup>44</sup> Yamaguchi, Jiro, “Japanese Security Policy After the End of the Cold War,” in Leaver, Richard, and James L. Richardson, eds., *Charting the Post-Cold War Order* (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1993), p.172.

and power had declined in relative terms while Japan was reaching new heights as an economic power. Moreover, some Japanese made the transition to the post-Cold War era convinced that, while military strength would continue to be important in the future, global power would increasingly be based on factors upon which Japan could rely--economic and technological strength.<sup>45</sup>

#### **E. POST-COLD WAR PERIOD**

Despite the dramatic imagery of Germans knocking down the Berlin Wall on live television, the beginning of the post-Cold War period was much less dramatic for many in Japan. The Soviet Union seemed less hostile and aggressive than in past years, but it still had the arsenal of a military superpower, a sizable portion of which had been produced for possible use in Asia. In other words, the jubilant celebration of German citizens did not yet signal a need for a change in the status quo. Perhaps the end of the Cold War in Europe was viewed as somewhat anticlimactic from East Asia. After all, Japan came to terms with the largest Communist state in the region years before after President Nixon's trip to China. To be sure, there were still potential threats in East Asia, such as the defiant regime in North Korea. In terms of Japan's security, there was no reason to expect a paradigm shift. Despite an increase in trade disputes and American efforts to get Japan to share the defense burden, the United States still seemed willing to be the 'elder brother' to Japan in terms of security. Evidence that the post-Cold War era had many changes in store for Japan came with the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in August 1990. This event was a turning point in Japan's security policy and the discussion of the proper role for Japan in the world.

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<sup>45</sup> Okita, Saburo, "Japan's Quiet Strength," *Foreign Policy*, Summer 1989, pp. 129-130.

First, it is necessary to understand that the United States and Japan (as well as others in Asia) had differing views on the necessity of the Gulf War. The United States did not want over half of the world's oil reserves in the hands of a 'rogue state' such as Iraq. This being the case, it seemed logical to seek assistance from Europe and Asia as these were the regions most dependent on oil from the Middle East.

On the other hand, the Japanese did not understand why new expectations had been placed on them. The Japanese view of the Gulf War can be summed up in the phrase *taigan no kasai* (conflagration on a distant shore). When the United States made it known that it expected help from Japan, since it planned to take action on its behalf, Japan was somewhat dumbfounded. The United States became agitated when it took weeks for a positive commitment from Japan which turned out to be an offer of only \$1 billion. To the United States, it seemed Japan expected to have its interests protected without any significant Japanese participation. After no small amount of American 'arm-twisting,' Japan offered to provide \$13 billion to help pay the costs of Operations Desert Shield/Desert Storm. In addition, two months after hostilities ceased, Japan sent a small contingent of minesweepers to support efforts in the region (which they had previously been unable to do during the 1987 Gulf crisis involving the reflagging of Kuwaiti oil tankers).<sup>46</sup>

Accurate or not, many Americans did not believe Japan 'carried its weight' in the Gulf War. Japan risked no lives and did not seem to appreciate the value of sending even a token military force. Actually, Prime Minister Kaifu Toshiki did attempt to pass legislation through the Diet that would have allowed SDF personnel to take part in United

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<sup>46</sup> Arase, p. 46.

Nations Peacekeeping Operations, but was unable to do so and withdrew the measure in November 1990. In addition, many in the United States saw the financial support provided by Japan as being not quite coerced but not quite voluntary.<sup>47</sup> On the other hand, many Japanese were irritated by such a perception. Why are we being criticized? Eager or not, we contributed \$13 billion to finance a war about which we were not consulted. Indeed, Japan probably would have been happy to buy Kuwaiti oil from Iraq and keep its \$13 billion. Many Japanese felt taken advantage of twice over. Not only did the United States come begging to Japan for money to fight the war, but then Japan got no credit for doing so.

In short, the Gulf War had a 'shock effect' on Japan by exposing several realities that would be a part of the post-Cold War era. First, this new era would not be free of conflicts, some of which would affect Japan. This shocked many in Japan who had come to believe that economic power could address most of Japan's security concerns. The Gulf War seemed to suggest this new era might contain conflicts which could interrupt the flow of natural resources to Japan--a very disquieting thought to business and industrial leaders.<sup>48</sup> Put another way, the Gulf War exposed the "blanks" in Japan's constitution. While Japan might want to be a peaceful nation, the experience of the Gulf War suggested that sometimes it might need to take military action for the good of the nation or the international community.<sup>49</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Ibid.

<sup>48</sup> Fukuyama, Francis, and Kongdan Oh, *The U.S.-Japan Security Relationship After the Cold War* (Santa Monica, CA: Rand 1993), p. 16.

<sup>49</sup> Yamaguchi, p. 173.

The second reality exposed by the Gulf War was that Japan was ill-prepared to take a leadership role in international politics (at that time). Japan seemed to be an outsider to the decisions being made and its foreign policy was reactive rather than proactive.<sup>50</sup> When Japan finally decided on a policy, its allies viewed it as too little too late. Japan took three weeks to come up with the initial commitment to the Gulf War effort and the West saw it as unacceptable. Japanese leaders also took note of the fact that the Gulf War was prosecuted under a United Nations resolution, an organization in which Japan did not wield a great deal of power. If it wanted to be a bigger player in the world, Japan would need to take part in existing international security regimes or perhaps help create new ones.<sup>51</sup>

In a similar vein, a third reality presented by the Gulf War was that Japan could not attain the stature of a leader in the international community through economic means alone. Though there was not universal agreement on this issue, to many in Japan the Gulf War showed that in some situations money is not as important as a military presence.<sup>52</sup> In order to avoid being seen as a "check-writing conscientious objector," Japan would need to take a more direct role in resolving security matters.<sup>53</sup>

As mentioned, these realities led to changes in Japanese thinking about their role in the world as well as the role of economic power. Many changes affecting the SDF were the result of this reassessment. Some changes expressed the need to make defense policy an integral part of a larger Japanese foreign policy rather than fashioning a defense policy

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<sup>50</sup> Fukuyama and Oh, p. 17.

<sup>51</sup> Arase, pp. 46-47.

<sup>52</sup> Fukuyama and Oh, p. 17.

<sup>53</sup> Brown, Eugene, "Japanese Security Policy in the Post-Cold War Era," *Asian Survey*, May 1994, pp. 440-441.

intended to placate American demands. That is not to say Japanese defense policy necessarily had to go against the interests of the United States. For instance, Japan noticed an increased role on the part of the United Nations since the end of the Cold War. With support from the United States, Japan increased its role in United Nations efforts and has made it clear that it desires a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council (although such efforts began early in the 1970's). In June 1992, the Japanese Diet passed legislation that allowed the deployment of up to 2000 troops in support of United Nations peacekeeping operations (PKO). The troops, armed only with pistols for self-defense, are required to withdraw from the scene if the U.N. forces come under attack. In addition, the Diet must give prior approval for each deployment.<sup>54</sup> Despite the controversial nature of such moves, Prime Minister Miyazawa moved in fairly short order and used this new authorization to send peacekeeping forces to Cambodia (Japanese PKO forces have also been dispatched to Mozambique and Zaire).<sup>55</sup> In addition, in its efforts to secure a seat on the security council, Japan has noted that it contributes more monetary support to the United Nations than the United Kingdom, France, and China combined.<sup>56</sup>

It is clear that some in Japan have a strong interest in a larger Japanese role in the United Nations. Recently, a defense advisory group to the prime minister suggested changing the structure of the SDF to better enable it to take part in peacekeeping missions. In addition to recommending Japanese law be changed to explicitly allow for such missions, the panel called for shifting SDF structure and equipment requirements to meet the needs of a PKO and cut personnel and equipment traditionally associated with

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<sup>54</sup> Matthews and Matsuyama, p. xvii.

<sup>55</sup> Brown, p. 441.

<sup>56</sup> Arase, p. 59.

countering the 'Soviet' threat. The panel recommended priority be given to items such as light 'high tech' army equipment, upgraded command, control, communications, and intelligence equipment (including reconnaissance satellites), and long-range air transport assets. In addition to an overall cut in SDF manpower, the panel recommended cuts in antisubmarine assets and combat aircraft because of a diminished threat in the region.<sup>57</sup>

While the focus of this thesis is primarily Japan's security relationship with the United States, a brief discussion of Japanese politics is unavoidable. The end of the Cold War and the reduced threat that followed have led to interesting changes in Japan's political landscape. The fall of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in 1993 ended what has been called the '1955 system' in which the LDP was effectively the permanent ruling party over the past four decades. On the other hand, the Japan Socialist Party (its English name was changed to the Social Democratic Party of Japan or the SDPJ in 1990) was relegated to the role of a permanent opposition party with little hope of ever gaining power but the ability to voice their views often and loudly on a variety of issues.<sup>58</sup> Part of the LDP's legitimacy was rooted in the notion that they could best attend to Cold War security issues. On the other hand, the Japan Socialist Party garnered support on the principled stand that the JSDF were an illegal and unnecessary potential target of the Soviet military. Both concepts became somewhat vague with the end of the Cold War. Another source of legitimacy for the LDP, that it knew best how to handle the economy, was also subject to doubt with the recession in the early 1990s. The LDP ultimately fell in

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<sup>57</sup> Sekigawa, Eiichiro, "Panel Urges Overhaul of Japan's Military," *Aviation Week and Space Technology*, 22 August 1994, p. 59.

<sup>58</sup> Fukatsu, Masumi, "Whither Goes the 1955 System?" *Japan Quarterly*, April-June 1995, pp. 166-169.



1993 when two new parties were formed from LDP factions claiming to be disappointed with the corrupt political system in Japan and advocating reform. An eight-party coalition formed a government in August 1993 which was led by Prime Minister Hosokawa Morihiro and lasted until April 1994. This was replaced by a coalition government which included the remains of both the LDP and the SDPJ (formerly the JSP). Though they had a superior number of seats, the LDP agreed to allow SDPJ leader Murayama Tomiichi to serve as prime minister.<sup>59</sup> However, soon after entering his office Murayama renounced what had been many of the fundamental positions of the SDPJ (and its predecessor the JSP) for decades and now voiced his agreement with the LDP on a variety of security issues. Most importantly, Murayama declared that the JSDF had a legitimate role to play in the defense of Japan. In addition, he declared approval for such concepts as the JSDF's defense of the sea-lanes 1000 miles from Japan and participation in joint military exercises with the United States.<sup>60</sup>

## **F. CONTINUITY AND CHANGE**

Despite these events, some common themes link the Cold War and post-Cold War eras. In terms of security, the underlying structure of Japan's relationship with the United States is basically the same now as in the late Cold War era. Though Japan has taken on many new roles, the United States is still the ultimate guarantor of Japan's security. This relationship is the subject of considerable debate in Japan. There are many who are satisfied with the status quo because they see the potential absence of the United States as a destabilizing factor for Japan and its neighbors in East Asia. Others in Japan, though

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<sup>59</sup> Ibid., p. 168.

<sup>60</sup> Fukatsu, Masumi, "The SDPJ's Astronomical Shift in Policy," *Japan Quarterly*, January-March 1995, pp. 76-77.

perhaps in favor of maintaining the relationship, worry that tensions between the two countries (or economic concerns in the United States) might lead to an American withdrawal from the region.<sup>61</sup> Others call for Japan to renounce its security treaty with the United States and seek a much closer relationship in a strengthened United Nations.<sup>62</sup> Despite this debate, a thread of continuity in Japan's security policy remains. Specifically, Japan's security policy toward Asia is largely determined by American policy.

Another common theme from the Cold War is the heavy economic component to Japan's security policy. Several examples of this trend are noticeable in Japanese policy since the end of the Cold War. In July 1992, in reaction to American pressure, Prime Minister Miyazawa agreed to pay 70 percent of the non-salary costs of the United States forces stationed in Japan by 1995. Another example of the Japanese approach are the "four ODA principles" outlined by Prime Minister Kaifu in 1991. This policy decreed that states granted Japanese official development assistance (ODA) would be evaluated based on their behavior in the areas of development, manufacture, or transfer of weapons of mass destruction as well as human rights.<sup>63</sup> Finally, as mentioned earlier, Japan has been a fairly generous donor to the United Nations, at least in part due to its desire for a seat on the U.N. security council.

Despite some continuity, the end of the Cold War brought new changes for Japanese defense policy. For instance, a fundamental problem facing Japan's defense policymakers is the absence of a large identifiable threat to protect against. Japan's

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<sup>61</sup> Curtis, Gerald L., "Meeting the Challenge of Japan in Asia," in Curtis, Gerald, ed., *The United States, Japan and Asia* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1994), p. 218.

<sup>62</sup> Yamaguchi, pp. 173-177.

<sup>63</sup> Arase, p. 58.

defense strategy can no longer be driven by the threat from the Soviet Union. Instead, its strategy must reflect the fact that the threat is less certain. That is not to say there are no potential threats to Japan. In fact, it appears the JDA is beginning to focus on the threat from the Korean Peninsula. The 1993 JDA White Paper mentioned North Korean missiles (possibly armed with nuclear warheads) as a potential problem<sup>64</sup> and the 1994 JDA White Paper used somewhat stronger language in pointing to the Korean Peninsula as the source of Japan's most plausible threat.<sup>65</sup> It is important to note that many in Japan considered the Korean Peninsula a potential threat throughout the Cold War but were less likely to talk about it in the interest of maintaining good relations with both Koreas.

An obvious change mentioned earlier is Japanese participation in United Nations peacekeeping operations. It is easy to dismiss these small steps as insignificant or marginal changes. However, in many ways these changes are indicative of a fundamental shift in Japan's defense policy. The difference is that during the Cold War Japan kept its distance from multilateral efforts. More importantly, as mentioned earlier, these peacekeeping operations reflect Japan's desire to pursue a defense policy in line with its foreign policy goals (such as a seat on the U.N. security council), instead of shaping defense policy to placate the United States. In addition, some suggest this new role is a "signal event in Japan's evolution from a politically marginal state to one that accepts its responsibility to help maintain the open and stable international order upon which its own safety and prosperity depend."<sup>66</sup> Instead of just focusing on the security of Japan, the focus is moving toward regional or international security and stability. However, an

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<sup>64</sup> Ibid., p. 48.

<sup>65</sup> *Defense of Japan*, Japan Defense Agency, 1994, pp. 36-41.

<sup>66</sup> Brown, p. 441.

opposing argument can be made that much of the value these operations have for Japan is linked to the fact that the United States sees them as positive steps. If the United States were to show less interest in peacekeeping operations or distance itself from the United Nations, such operations might be of less value to Japan. From this point of view, Japan is still forming its foreign policy to placate the United States.

In addition to peacekeeping operations, Japan has taken a greater interest in playing the role of 'honest broker' as well as other 'soft' security issues. For instance, Japan hosted talks for Cambodian factions in Tokyo and provided a Japanese U.N. official to head the United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia. In short, Japan is taking part in or considering courses of action that were recently considered taboo.<sup>67</sup> Pursuing these 'soft' issues is understandable since Japan has long attached a 'security' value to many concerns addressed in the United Nations (such as welfare, North-South relations, the environment) which other countries would not as readily classify as security issues.

Another change in the post-Cold War era occurred in Japan's domestic politics. The fall of the Liberal Democratic Party (LDP) in June of 1993 could have far-reaching implications for Japan's security policy if another party eventually comes to power. While the LDP is not totally out of power and the Japan Socialist Party also lost many Diet seats in 1993, the prospect that the LDP might need to continue 'sharing' power could lead to the breakup of what Chalmers Johnson calls the "cozy relationship that now exists among politicians, bureaucrats and insider industrialists."<sup>68</sup> If this proved to be the beginning of a larger trend, this could lead to a Japan that is more politically legitimate and internationally

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<sup>67</sup> Arase, p. 48.

<sup>68</sup> Johnson, Chalmers, "Rethinking Asia," p. 21.

responsive (which will be discussed in more detail later). In terms of security, this might make Japan's task of finding the appropriate security role easier and perhaps ease some of the fears of its neighbors in East Asia. Of course, decreasing the power of the LDP would not automatically lead to a more legitimate and internationally responsive government in Japan. For all its past inequities, the LDP provided stability in Japan. For instance, if the long-term result of the fall of the LDP turns out to be the rise of right-wing or ultra-nationalist elements in Japan, this will undoubtedly cause a great deal of anxiety in East Asia.



#### IV. SCENARIO ONE: EAST ASIA'S POLICEMAN?

As shown in the previous chapter, the Cold War threat posed by the Soviet Union provided a convincing rationale for various American military commitments abroad--including the bilateral relationship with Japan. Lacking the justification provided by the Cold War, I believe the security relationship between the United States and Japan will end if American troops are increasingly seen as the 'policemen' of Asia or the 'cap in the bottle' of Japan without an identifiable (to the American public) benefit to match that role. During the Cold War, the United States was willing to subordinate economic concerns for the sake of security. Given the tremendous economic growth that has occurred in East Asia and the extent to which this region is seen as an economic competitor to the United States, I believe it will be difficult for the United States to separate economic and security issues in the future.

The terms 'policemen' of Asia and 'cap in the bottle' are used with the knowledge that these are 'loaded' terms mostly used in a pejorative sense. They are terms often found in the literature on East Asia though they are not accurate in the strictest sense. For instance, a policeman is entrusted by society to maintain order and is permitted to use reasonable force toward that end. If a crime is committed, a policeman is expected to respond to the scene of that crime and take some sort of action. Obviously, the American military in East Asia does not have the mandate of a policeman. The 'cap in the bottle' analogy is a phrase coined by Major General Henry C. Stackpole III when speaking about the need for an American military presence in Japan in an interview with the *Washington*

*Post* in 1990.<sup>1</sup> This phrase seems to suggest that there is something in the bottle (presumably Japanese militarism) fighting to get out when this may not be the case. I have chosen to use these terms with some reservation but secure in the knowledge that, while not strictly accurate, the terms are broad shorthand for a set of circumstances in which the American military finds itself. In addition, characterizations such as the 'policeman' of Asia are easily understood by the American public which has the potential to play an important part in this scenario.

#### **A. THE PRIMACY OF THE DOMESTIC AGENDA**

In many respects, the events which would bring about this scenario have less to do with the balance of power equations or the grand strategy of statesmen and more to do with the raw perceptions of the American public and the pressure they exert on their elected officials. These concerns are rarely voiced in terms of the preferred balance of power in the world or the consequences of an American military withdrawal from the world. Instead the debate seems to be framed in the concept that involvement abroad 'distracts' America from important challenges at home. In an article entitled, "The Primacy of the Domestic Agenda," Peter G. Peterson and James K. Sebenius argue that the perception exists among many Americans that the policies of the Cold War hindered progress on the "domestic agenda." Some view the neglect of domestic issues such as economic competitiveness, education, and poverty as greater long-term threats to the security of the United States than any visible external threat. Peterson and Sebenius suggest a foreign threat would need to be quite threatening to take priority over the domestic concerns they mention: two million Americans leaving the education system

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<sup>1</sup> Pyle, p. 16.



annually unable to read or write adequately; one in four children under six in the United States living in poverty; a nonexistent long-term energy policy; huge federal government budget deficits; and exploding entitlement programs.<sup>2</sup>

In addition to this desire to devote more attention to domestic concerns ignored during the Cold War, perhaps a more inward focus has a certain amount of resonance with the American people because of an historical tendency toward isolationism. Arthur Schlesinger, Jr., discusses American isolationism in an article in *Foreign Affairs* entitled, "Back to the Womb?" In that article, he argues that while the United States has never been isolationist in terms of commerce or culture, "through most of its history, the republic has been isolationist with regard to foreign policy."<sup>3</sup> In his farewell address in 1796, President George Washington stated his aversion to permanent alliances and involving the United States in the "ordinary vicissitudes" of European politics. Washington went on to point out that the United States had been blessed with a "detached and distant situation" and rhetorically asked why the United States should ever want to "forego the advantages of so peculiar a situation."<sup>4</sup> Later, in his First Inaugural Address, Thomas Jefferson voiced a similar sentiment. Though he did not elaborate much in this particular speech, Jefferson provided an enduring concept to the debate on America's role in the world when he pledged to pursue "honest friendship with all nations, entangling alliances with none."<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>2</sup> Peterson, Peter G., and James K. Sebenius, "The Primacy of the Domestic Agenda," in Allison, Graham, and Gregory F. Treverton, eds., *Rethinking America's Security* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1992), pp. 58-69.

<sup>3</sup> Schlesinger, Arthur, Jr., "Back to the Womb?" *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 1995, p. 2.

<sup>4</sup> Quotes taken from Commager, Henry Steele, ed., *Documents of American History* (New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, Inc., 1949), p. 174.

<sup>5</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 188.

For quite some time, the United States was content to exploit its good fortune and stayed aloof of European politics. However, against the advice of Washington and Jefferson, the United States was eventually drawn into such conflicts when it became involved in the First World War. However, though some regretted it later, the United States was content to largely withdraw into isolation after that war. As Schlesinger writes, "after a two-year Wilsonian internationalist binge, (America) reverted to familiar and soothing isolationism." Schlesinger goes on to argue that in the years between the world wars, "isolationism set the terms of the foreign policy debate."<sup>6</sup> Even after the Second World War, the first impulse of the United States was to withdraw. However, the large-scale demobilization after the Second World War only led to a scramble in order to meet the challenge of the Korean War.

Some neoisolationists, such as Republican candidate for president Patrick Buchanan, seem to voice sentiments in this post-Cold War era similar to those which followed the First and Second World Wars. Though Buchanan seems to recognize the importance of a strong military, he seems to speak in favor a greatly diminished military presence abroad and protectionist trade measures at home. Buchanan argues that an American post-Cold War foreign policy is evolving which has little to do with the vital interests of the United States and points to involvement in places such as Somalia, Macedonia, or Haiti as examples. Buchanan argues that these operations have led to a "neoisolationist mood" among Americans who want the United States to remain the leader of the Free World but not if the price is "a steady drainage of American wealth and

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<sup>6</sup> Schlesinger, p. 3.

repeated spilling of American blood.”<sup>7</sup> Buchanan argues further that the ‘interventionists’ desire to remake the world in America’s image only serves to make the United States appear hypocritical when it chooses a legitimate national interest instead of standing up for its highest ideals. The United States might speak loudly for democracy in Haiti and China, but not in Kuwait, Saudi Arabia or Algeria. Buchanan argues that the solution is for the United States to stop trying to ‘save the world’ and ‘put America first,’ instead.<sup>8</sup> In fairness, it is worth noting that what aspiring presidential candidates say on the campaign trail and what they do when they occupy the White House are often quite different. At the same time, while Buchanan’s view cannot be considered mainstream, others in the Republican Party (notably in the House of Representatives) seem to share his sentiment. For example, House Majority Leader Dick Armey has voiced concern that America’s foreign policy “has gone too far in the direction of globalism.” Toward that end, House Republicans recently introduced legislation aimed at limiting the president’s ability to put American military forces under the command of the United Nations as well as reduce American funding of peacekeeping operations.<sup>9</sup> An argument can be made that, at this stage, it is difficult to ascertain if these initiatives are genuine or motivated toward some short-term political goal. Whatever the case, they support the point made earlier: isolationism or an inward focus has a great deal of resonance with many Americans.

This sentiment is not exclusively held by those traditionally associated with the ‘America First’ camp. In *Around the Cragged Hill*, elder statesman George F. Kennan

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<sup>7</sup> Buchanan, Patrick J., “For All His Tough Talk and Bumbling, He Has Kept American Blood From Flowing: Clinton Makes Peace,” *San Jose Mercury News*, 3 August 1994, p. 9B.

<sup>8</sup> Buchanan, Patrick J., “America Can’t Remake the World in its Image,” *San Jose Mercury News*, 27 August 1994, p. 7B.

<sup>9</sup> “Withdrawal Symptoms,” *The New Republic*, 13 March 1995, p. 9.

calls for a reevaluation of American priorities. Though he denies his philosophy is isolationist, Kennan suggests that resources devoted to foreign policy should be "cut to the bone" until the domestic problems the United States faces are resolved. United States foreign involvement should be "very modest and restrained" and should focus on curtailing American's existing commitments and avoiding new ones.<sup>10</sup>

## **B. THE CHALLENGE FROM EAST ASIA**

The primacy of the domestic agenda would seem to affect American activities worldwide, but the important question for this thesis relates to how it might affect the security relationship between the United States and Japan. I believe the sensitivity to overseas commitments (at the expense of domestic concerns) has the potential to be especially acute with regard to East Asia. Defining East Asia as an economic challenger to the United States seems to have become somewhat of a cliché. While Western Europe continues to compete economically with the United States, the challenge from East Asia probably appears more pressing to many Americans because of the economic surge it has experienced in recent decades and is therefore fresh in the minds of the American public. In addition, unlike Western Europe, East Asia (and other developing areas of the world) is often associated with the perceived threat of cheap foreign labor.

In the face of the domestic problems mentioned above, the economic challenge from East Asia, and the end of the Cold War, the importance of American involvement in East Asia might become a concept that is only vaguely understood by Americans in the future. For example, if the purpose of an American presence in East Asia is to promote

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<sup>10</sup> Kennan, George F., *Around the Cragged Hill* (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 1993), p. 183.

stability, who benefits from this stability and at what cost to the United States? Are all the countries in East Asia paying their fair share for this stability? In recent times, the perception that Japan did not contribute fairly to efforts during the Gulf War seems to indicate that the American public might be sensitive to such questions. Similarly, most in the United States probably understand the rationale for American involvement in arresting the development of nuclear weapons in North Korea. However, if this issue were to be resolved, many in the United States might begin to question the American military presence on the Korean Peninsula. The argument that an American military presence is necessary because Japan and Korea hold a great deal of animosity toward each other would scarcely seem adequate justification. As Robert A. Manning and Paula Stern pointed out in an issue of *Foreign Affairs*, "Would the United States be defending one democratic, free-market ally against another?"<sup>11</sup>

Until now I have discussed factors which might threaten the security relationship the United States and Japan in the future. In fact, some *already* question the necessity of maintaining the security alliance in the long-term. While their arguments are not isolationist, some scholars seem in tune with the sentiments discussed above and have called for a large-scale reduction in the American military presence in East Asia. Richard J. Ellings and Edward A. Olsen have suggested that the United States should play the role of the 'engaged balancer.' This course of action is based on the assumption that the threat to the United States from East Asia is economic, not military. This plan calls for the total withdrawal of troops permanently stationed in Asia as soon as is prudent which essentially means when the problem on the Korean Peninsula is solved. The United States would

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<sup>11</sup> Manning and Stern, p. 90.

remain 'engaged' through the patrol of sea lanes and exchange military bases for the right to regular access to military bases or port facilities (a strong military presence should be maintained on Guam as well). This option would shy away from bilateral relationships and would encourage but not depend upon any emerging multilateral regimes which would be treated essentially as confidence building measures.<sup>12</sup>

Chalmers Johnson has put forward a similar 'balancing' option. He also begins by calling for a reassessment of American policy in light of the end of the Cold War. First, he points out the paradox mentioned earlier; the United States provides security for a region with which it competes economically. Second, the American military presence in South Korea is based on outdated global concerns instead of serving present interests in the region. Johnson calls for the speedy withdrawal of ground forces from South Korea. He believes the ground forces are no longer needed because the most serious threat from North Korea is nuclear, not conventional. This makes the American forces there little more than potential hostages for some future conflict. Furthermore, absent the implications of the Cold War, Johnson believes South Korea is fully capable of defending itself from North Korea. Finally, based on China's economic potential, the United States needs to begin thinking about how to balance China in the future.

Based on his reassessment, Johnson believes the United States should seek to maintain a balance among Japan, China, and ASEAN while supporting Korea and Vietnam as 'buffer' states in East Asia. On the economic front, he calls for the United States to make strategic alliances with countries such as South Korea (and presumably a unified

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<sup>12</sup> Ellings, Richard J., and Edward A. Olsen, "A New Pacific Profile," *Foreign Policy*, Winter 1992-93, pp. 129-132.

Korea) to produce goods that would cut into Japan's trade surplus. As mentioned in Chapter III, Johnson sees the "cozy relationship" among "politicians, bureaucrats, and insider industrialists" in Japan as the source of what he perceives as unfair stances on trade and security. Johnson believes that moves at economic and technological cooperation between the United States and South Korea would send a signal to Japan that might induce it to become more internationally responsible.<sup>13</sup>

Both of these approaches have far-reaching implications for the security relationship between the United States and Japan. The scholars mentioned above reject the assumption that the bilateral relationship between the United States and Japan is inevitably the cornerstone of American security strategy in East Asia. This would represent a fundamental change in American policy. Even those who support a multilateral approach, such as the Clinton Administration, see the bilateral relationship with Japan as a 'given.' Even if the security relationship were to continue to exist in name, the removal of American military forces permanently stationed in Japan would effectively end of the bilateral relationship with Japan. Furthermore, Japan (and others in East Asia) would need to make a fundamental reassessment of how best to provide for its own security absent the security guarantee provided by the United States for the past five decades.

Implicit in the arguments of Johnson, as well as Ellings and Olsen, is the notion that the United States is bearing a disproportionate amount of the cost of security and stability in East Asia relative to Japan. At the beginning of this chapter, I suggested that the security relationship between the United States and Japan would come to an end if

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<sup>13</sup> Johnson, "Rethinking Asia," pp. 27-28.

American troops are increasingly seen as the 'policemen' of Asia or the 'cap in the bottle of Japan' without some identifiable benefit to match those roles. In the abstract, this proposition would seem to have two solutions. The first solution would be to make the role of 'policeman' or 'cap in the bottle' a beneficial one for the United States to play. The second solution would be to change America's role to another which truly benefits the United States. I do not believe the first solution is possible. This solution assumes that the United States would be willing to maintain its current military presence in East Asia in return for more money from Japan. As mentioned before, that fact that Japan contributed a considerable amount of money (\$13 billion) to help pay for the Gulf War did not seem to convince many in the world that Japan had paid its 'fair share.' In addition, Japan has pledged to pay for seventy-five percent of the non-salary costs of the American military forces stationed in Japan by 1995--approximately \$4 billion annually.<sup>14</sup> This means that even if the United States were to demand that Japan pay one hundred percent of the cost of the American military in Japan, it would not necessarily mean a financial windfall for the United States. If it were so inclined, what else could the Japanese government do to maintain an American military presence in East Asia? Hypothetically, Japan could pay a 'premium' to the United States to ensure its military presence in the region. Such an arrangement would seem difficult to sell in either the United States or Japan. From the point of view of the United States, as Kenneth Pyle has stated, American troops would be "keeping order for an economically and technologically thriving region dominated by Japan." Regardless of who pays the cost of maintaining the order, American forces would

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<sup>14</sup> Evans, Martin C., "On Anniversary, Okinawans Seem to Like Americans," *Orange County Register*, 1 April 95. Evans quoted the figure of \$4 billion from a JDA spokesman.



be playing a "role akin to mercenaries." From the point of view of Japan, the presence of American military forces (for which Japan provides financial assistance) is already a sore subject for some in Japan--particularly nationalists elements. As economic competition increasingly manifests itself in trade disputes, many Japanese might begin to wonder at the logic of "paying for a watchdog that watches them."<sup>15</sup> Nationalist leaders in Japan, such as Ishihara Shintaro, take this thought a step further and assert that the United States is standing in the way of progress:

Japan's franchise is Asia. I think Japan should assume greater responsibility than the United States or Europe in the development of the Asian region. It is extremely unpleasant to watch the United States drive a wedge between Japan and other Asian countries by propagating the idea that the U.S. military presence is preventing Japan's invasion of the region. In combining the human capital of the Newly Industrialized Countries of Asia with Japan's high technology and knowledge-intensive industry, Asia could become a powerful economic bloc.<sup>16</sup>

The second solution mentioned above was to change to another role which benefits the United States, not only in the short-term but the long-term as well. The purpose of this chapter is to highlight how domestic concerns might create friction in the security relations between the United States and Japan. The actions I believe necessary to ensure the long-term viability of the security relationship are the subject of Chapter VII. However, for the sake of answering the question posed above, a few points are worth making. If the relationship is to survive, Japan and the United States must play more equal roles in the security and stability of East Asia. While the United States seeks to share the financial burden of the security relationship, it must be willing to allow Japan to

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<sup>15</sup> Pyle, pp. 137-138.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., p. 138.

play a larger role with regard to decisionmaking on security matters of interest to both countries. On the other hand, Japan must be willing to go beyond providing financial support for those who presumably ensure stability in the region and are the ultimate guarantors of Japan's security. I believe Japan must prove it is willing to play a security role commensurate with its economic power in the region. As will be shown later, changing the relationship to make it more 'equal' has a great many complicating factors, but I believe it is the best hope for the relationship in the long-term.

### **C. A SYSTEMIC VIEW: THE DOMINANT POWER CUTS EXPENSES**

The need for change in the relationship is based on the fact that its structure reflects the period in which it was created. The security alliance was formed when the United States was the unquestioned political, military, and economic power in the world and Japan was struggling to recover from its total defeat in the Second World War. While the United States remains the dominant power in the world, it has declined in relative terms while Japan has grown into an economic power of the first order. Yet, the basic structure of the security relationship remains the same. To help explain how states act in situations such as this, it is useful to view the relationship abstractly within the larger political system using international relations theory.

As mentioned in Chapter II, Gilpin's fourth assumption is that, "once an equilibrium between the costs and benefits of further change and expansion is reached, the tendency is for the economic costs of maintaining the status quo to rise faster than the economic capacity to support the status quo."<sup>17</sup> Many of the costs that the dominant power expends to maintain the system are not necessarily productive investments and are

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<sup>17</sup> Gilpin, p. 156.

an excessive burden on the economy of the dominant state. Various internal and external changes increase the cost of protection as well as consumption (a tension between 'guns and butter') which leads to a financial crisis in the dominant power. Internally, several changes lead to political conflict over the allocation of the state's resources: an eroding industrial base increasingly based on services; increased cost of military technology; and high public and private consumption rates.<sup>18</sup> Many of these problems seem to plague the United States today.<sup>19</sup> Gilpin also mentions external changes which can be seen in the relationship between the United States and Japan presently. The first change is the result of changes in the distribution of power within the international system. The rise of states such as Japan, which often benefited from the public goods (i.e., stability) provided by the United States without paying its 'fair share,' makes it increasingly difficult for the United States to maintain its position in the international system. While no power immediately threatens the United States as the dominant power in the system, the benefit of being the dominant power is not as lucrative as it once was. The United States has spent untold billions of dollars in the past few decades to maintain the international system (i.e., relative peace and stability). However, while the United States benefited from the system it maintained, in relative terms, other states benefited even more. As mentioned, this is

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., pp. 159-166.

<sup>19</sup> While other internal problems are obviously present in the United States, an 'eroding industrial base' is the source of some debate. Some economists argue that it is incorrect to state flatly that the industrial base of the United States is eroding. While countries such as Japan and Germany have 'caught up' with the United States in recent decades with respect to industrial technology, the United States maintains a large market share in most high-technology industries. In addition, the United States spends the most on research and development in absolute terms and spends about the same as Japan and Germany relative to the size of its economy. For a full discussion see: Nelson, Richard R., and Gavin Wright, "The Rise and Fall of Technological Leadership: The Postwar Era in Historical Perspective," *Journal of Economic Literature*, December 1992, pp. 1931-1964; Butler, Alison, "Is the United States Losing Its Dominance in High-Technology Industries?" *Federal Reserve Bank of St. Louis*, November/December 1992, pp. 19-34.

partly because maintaining the system is a 'public good' for which other powers, such as Japan, need not pay a 'fair share' to benefit. In addition, the great increase in relative power reflects Japan's starting point at the end of the Second World War. Another external factor is that, in past decades, the diffusion of technology by the United States has benefited countries such as Japan. By providing a stable environment in which Japan (and other countries) could flourish and by diffusing technology, the United States created the situation which exists today--Japan is an economic competitor and a potential challenger to the position of the United States in the international system.<sup>20</sup>

Gilpin's second assumption is also helpful in explaining the above scenario. Specifically, states attempt to change the international system only when the expected benefits exceed the expected costs (i.e., an expected net gain). Gilpin points out that states not only change the system to increase benefits, but to decrease costs as well. Generally, the dominant power can do this in one of three ways: eliminate the source of the increasing costs (i.e., to weaken or destroy the rising challenger); expand to a more secure and less costly defensive perimeter; or reduce international commitments.<sup>21</sup> The third option seems to accurately describe the behavior of the United States in this scenario. To maintain the status quo within the international system, the United States attempts to

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<sup>20</sup> While Japan could challenge the position of the United States in the international system, it is worth noting that some economists highlight two key factors which played a part in Japan's tremendous economic growth, technological diffusion from the United States and a high saving rate, that will not benefit them in the future. With regard to technology, Japan has largely caught up with the United States. While Japan will likely continue to prosper, it may have to be satisfied with 'Western' rates of economic growth. The much larger growth rates of the past few decades were in part attributable to the acquisition of technology from the United States. With regard to the high savings rate, demographics will likely take its toll in the future as an aging Japan is supported by fewer and fewer workers. For a full discussion see "The Japanese Economy: From Miracle to Mid-Life Crisis," *The Economist*, 6 March 1993, pp. 3-18 (Japan Survey).

<sup>21</sup> Gilpin, p. 191.

reduce its share of the cost of maintaining the system. The United States has sought ways to share the burden of maintaining the international system for decades. As mentioned in Chapter III, the United States tried unsuccessfully to get Japan to contribute militarily in both the Korean and Vietnam Wars. American officials were more successful in areas where Japan could make contributions to maintaining the system without direct military action. In many cases the United States shifted the burden by emphasizing Japanese economic assistance. Examples include Japan's contribution to the cost of maintaining American military forces in that country or Japan's \$13 billion contribution to the cost of prosecuting the Gulf War in 1990-91. In a broader sense, the Nixon Doctrine, which was introduced by the United States in 1971 and called on allies in Asia to take a larger role in containing Communism in the region, was an effort by the United States to reduce the expenses involved in maintaining the system.



## V. SCENARIO TWO: JAPAN BECOMES 'NORMAL'

### A. A NORMAL NATION?

In *Blueprint for a New Japan*, Ozawa Ichiro dedicates six chapters to explaining the necessary reforms for Japan to become a 'normal nation.' He argues that in recent decades Japan has narrowly pursued economic concerns and has shirked its responsibilities to the very international system that allowed Japan to prosper in the post-war era. He calls for a wide range of reforms that would make Japan more internationally responsible and a well respected state in the global community.<sup>1</sup> I believe many of the themes developed by Ozawa represent the best answers for some of Japan's most pressing problems in the future. However, his 'blueprint' for a 'normal' Japan would not be an easy road. Of specific interest to this thesis, I believe the security relationship between the United States and Japan could be threatened if Japan assumes a military size and role commensurate with its political and economic position in Asia--or as Ozawa states, it becomes 'normal.'

Ozawa addresses the need for reform on a variety of domestic issues ranging from tax, electoral, and educational reform to the need to reduce the number of hours worked by Japanese employees. However, the reforms of interest to this thesis are those which seek to shape Japan's role in the world. In Ozawa's view, a 'normal' Japan would maintain a strong relationship with the United States and cooperate in American efforts to keep a peaceful and stable Asia; reorganize the SDF to assist the United States and the United Nations in their efforts to build peace around the world; and, work to strengthen

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<sup>1</sup> Ozawa, Ichiro, *Blueprint for a New Japan* (Tokyo: Kodansha International, 1994), pp. 93-100.

the United Nations and encourage the growth of multilateral regimes in Asia and elsewhere in the world.<sup>2</sup>

Others have characterized Japan as not 'normal.' In the Fall 1992 issue of *Daedalus*, Chalmers Johnson authored an article, "Japan in Search of a 'Normal' Role." Johnson argues that the Japan-United States Mutual Security Treaty of 1952 (and the 1960 version) "took no cognizance of Japan as an economic competitor of the United States." While many continue to depend on this same security treaty for peace and stability in Asia, Johnson points out three contradictions that affect the security relationship between the United States and Japan. First, he cites a contradiction mentioned by Edward A. Olsen who notes that most Asian leaders are glad the United States still wants to be a leader in Asia. However, they are somewhat surprised because they believe the United States is a "superpower with economic feet of clay" and wonder privately how long this deal can last. Second, Johnson views the American military forces in Japan as the "institutional corollary" to Article 9 of the Japanese Constitution or as mentioned before, the 'cap in the bottle.' It is probably fair to say that many of Japan's neighbors (especially the Koreas and China) view the American presence as the 'cap in the bottle' as much as the guarantor of stability in East Asia. Furthermore, when the United States presses Japan to play a larger role on security issues, it is "tampering with the very foundations of the Japanese Constitution" and stirring up fear among Japan's neighbors. Third, while the United States asks Japan to pay the majority of the costs of American forces stationed in Japan, unlike its NATO allies or its allies in South Korea, Japan does not participate in joint command. With these contradictions in mind, Johnson predicts that

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<sup>2</sup> Ozawa, pp. 101-121.



by the late 1990's Japan will reemerge as a significant political actor on the world stage. He predicts Japan will no longer remain a "client" of the United States as it did during the height of the Cold War and it will go on to be a "fully fledged major power." Johnson predicts that a gradual drawdown of American military forces in East Asia will allow Japanese leaders to organize domestic support for an independent defensive capability.<sup>3</sup>

Johnson hints at something that is worth making more clear. Specifically, it is not the presence of the American military that makes Japan 'abnormal' or keeps it from being a "fully fledged major power," but the nature of the relationship. After all, American military forces are stationed in South Korea as well as various countries in Europe and these nations are not routinely referred to as 'abnormal' (though in fact it is somewhat abnormal historically for the United States). I believe the difference is that a country such as the United Kingdom, while it does not possess defensive capabilities equal to the United States, remains the ultimate guarantor of its own security. In fact, if the United States decided to remove its military forces from the United Kingdom today, this would not necessitate a fundamental review by government leaders on how to defend the United Kingdom. While it cannot match the defense resources of the United States, it possesses a highly trained and professional military with experience in a wide range of military operations and a nuclear deterrent. In addition, the United Kingdom is not viewed as the 'younger brother' to the United States in terms of security. Instead, the United States and the United Kingdom are partners attempting to maintain peace and stability in Europe. In a broader sense, the United Kingdom pursues a foreign policy that, while usually in agreement with the United States, is based on its own perception of its national interests.

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<sup>3</sup> Johnson, "Japan in Search of a 'Normal' Role," pp. 3-6.

Such is not the case with Japan. If the United States were to pull out its military forces from Japan today, this would require Japan to make fundamental decisions about how to defend itself. Absent a state willing to play the role that the United States has played for the past few decades, at a minimum Japan would need to reorganize its military and perhaps increase the size of it. In addition, Japanese foreign policy still seems to be trapped in the Cold War paradigm--following the lead or reacting to the foreign policy of the United States.

As described in Chapter III, the difference in America's security ties with Japan (compared to other allies) is rooted in the relationship which evolved after the Japan's surrender in the Second World War. Early in the post-war period, the desire to keep Japan docile led to political, economic, and security policies that were largely determined by the United States (although usually in Japan's interest as well). While Japan evolved into an economic power in the past few decades, its security and foreign policy are still largely contingent on the interests of the United States. For Japan to become 'normal,' it must become the ultimate guarantor of its own security and pursue a foreign policy that reflects its interests and does more than just react to American initiatives or demands (though it need not clash with the interests of the United States).

Future historians might argue that after its complete defeat in the Second World War, Japan gradually rebuilt itself and assumed a position as one of the major powers in the world. In other words, Japan made a gradual transition to 'normality' (if it continued to assume more responsibility for its security). As discussed in Chapter III, there have been many changes in Japan's defense and foreign policy that would seem to be the first

steps toward Japan becoming a 'fully fledged major power.' Many of these changes were the result of pressure applied by the United States in an effort to share the burden of defense (i.e., the Nixon Doctrine), while others were efforts by Japan to increase its own security within the existing security construct (such as its comprehensive security programs). More recently, changes in Japan's defense policy seem to have come from the realization that it is not a major player in international security regimes when it ought to be (i.e., participation in peacekeeping operations since the Gulf War).

These are gradual changes which are not threatening to the existing security relationship in the short-term. However, more dramatic changes are potentially threatening and these are the main focus of this chapter. I believe regional dynamics, which are already beginning to emerge, hold the greatest potential to move Japan toward becoming a 'fully fledged major power.' Before discussing these regional dynamics, some points need to be clarified to help frame the discussion. First, I do not believe a 'normal' Japan and a strong security relationship with the United States are mutually exclusive. In fact, this scenario is the focus of Chapter VII. However, this chapter focuses on the opportunities along the way for the security relationship to founder. Second, in this chapter, the removal of American military forces from Japan will often be equated with the end of the security relationship. An argument can be made that a well-crafted agreement (perhaps with a nuclear guarantee) might keep the relationship intact without American forces. However, I believe that even if the relationship continues to exist 'on paper,' the benefits of the relationship will have diminished greatly. Without an American military presence, Japanese defense policy must change (unless Japan can find another country

willing to act at the United States did). Japanese security planners might be tempted to question if the United States would actually come to Japan's aid. For instance, would the United States be willing to commit itself to a nuclear war to defend Japan? Japan might be confident of a American security pledge when relations with the United States are good, but what about if relations sour? In addition, Japan's neighbors will likely fail to appreciate an 'on paper' security relationship that does not keep the 'cap in the bottle.' With these points made, we now consider some of the dynamics in East Asia which might encourage Japan to play a larger and more independent security role.

## **B. THE DYNAMICS OF A UNIFIED KOREA**

In international relations theory, a classic security dilemma occurs when one country's efforts to enhance its security are seen by other countries as threatening to their own security.<sup>4</sup> What country X sees as benign efforts to improve or expand its defensive capability are seen by country Y as sinister moves inherently aggressive or threatening to itself. In response to the efforts of X, country Y takes measures to protect itself from country X. Throughout history, to deal with this dilemma, countries such as X and Y have involved themselves in arms races and sought out alliances to protect themselves. While it does not exist today, I believe the seeds of a future security dilemma exist in the relationship between a unified Korea and Japan. First, many Koreans have a great deal of mistrust and suspicion of Japan because of past events, especially those associated with the Japanese occupation and annexation of the Korean Peninsula earlier this century. Second, with the end of the Cold War, Japan is less concerned with the Russian threat and is beginning to focus on the possible threat posed by the Korean Peninsula (helped by the

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<sup>4</sup> Kreisberg, Chiu, and Kahan, p. 1.

traditional view of Korea as the 'dagger pointed at the heart of Japan'). Third, economic success has engendered a great deal of national pride in both South Korea and Japan as well as the resources to mount an impressive arms race. I believe this potential security dilemma is one road which might take Japan toward becoming a 'normal' or 'fully fledged major power' with a military to match its status in the world.

As mentioned previously, much of the mistrust and suspicion between the two countries is rooted in the past. Koreans are especially sensitive to any perceived threats from Japan and are among those most concerned about the prospects for a remilitarized Japan. Koreans who are suspicious of Japan can look as far back as the late sixteenth century for examples of Japanese aggression. In a bid to conquer China, Toyotomi Hideyoshi invaded the Korean Peninsula in 1592 and quickly overran it before China took action to halt his advance.<sup>5</sup> More recently, the occupation and eventual annexation of Korea in 1910 by Japan is the source of hostility in Korea. Japan's colonial rule of Korea was somewhat harsh. In addition to aggressively exploiting Korea for its own benefit, Japan's rule was cruel in that Korean language and culture came under attack. Koreans were taught Japanese language and culture in an effort to assimilate Korea into the Japanese Empire. The memory of the colonial period under Japan is still strong for many elements within Korea, especially in North Korea where the government's 'anti-Japanese' stance is a source of some legitimacy. Indeed, nationalism in both North and South Korea has an 'anti-Japanese' component.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Reischauer, p. 66.

<sup>6</sup> Steinberg, David I., *The Republic of Korea* (Boulder CO: Westview Press, 1989), pp. 41-47.

If Korea can point to Japanese aggression since the late sixteenth century, Japan can point to the Mongol invasions of the late thirteenth century as the earliest roots of their concern over the threat from the Korean Peninsula. With a certain amount of logic, throughout its history, Japan has viewed Korea as the most likely direction from which a threat will come. Japan went to war twice in ten years at the turn of this century when other powers exercised a great deal of influence in Korea. While its imperial designs must be acknowledged, Japan made it clear that the Korean Peninsula was important to its security.

While many of the states in East Asia have little modern experience dealing with each other outside the influence of Western powers, those living in North and South Korea have not had a normal relationship with their countrymen for several decades. It is important to note that Korea was not divided due to any concern indigenous to the peninsula (or East Asia for that matter). Rather, it was divided because of the European based ideological conflict between the United States and the Soviet Union. These powers occupied Korea following the Second World War because it was considered Japanese territory. This is important because, though the peninsula was split by the superpowers, Koreans can also assign a certain amount of blame to Japan for the division of Korea. After all, if Japan had not annexed Korea in 1910, why would the allies have seen fit to occupy it after the Second World War? Although this rationale contains a great deal of truth, it is also indicative of the tendency of Koreans to see themselves as 'victims.' In other words, if only the Japanese had not annexed Korea, everything would be well and good on the Korean Peninsula today.

Since the focus of this section is on Japan and a *unified* Korea, several assumptions must be made with the knowledge that these are not concrete and Korean unification could take another path. My assumptions are basically a best case scenario for South Korea. Using this scenario as a 'baseline' is advantageous because it allow me to highlight at various points in this section some problems caused by slightly different scenarios. With this in mind, the following assumptions apply: that the Korean Peninsula is unified in the medium-term future (at least fifteen years from now); that North Korea is peacefully and gradually assimilated into South Korea politically and economically; and that neither of the Koreas bring nuclear weapons to the unification.

The presence of American military forces in South Korea and Japan is generally seen by both countries as important to the stability of East Asia. Both parties view the other as a potential threat to their security (although both also view China as a potential threat) and the American presence is seen as reducing the chances that either will grow more aggressive. In addition, some in East Asia view the United States as best suited to play the role of 'honest broker' on regional issues. This is because the United States is the leading political and military power in the region and also somewhat detached from East Asia. China, Japan, Korea, or Russia could hardly play this role since the region's security issues more directly affect them. In addition, most are involved in territorial disputes which make the 'honest broker' role more difficult for them to play.<sup>7</sup>

Despite the perceived benefits to regional stability, the unification of the Korean Peninsula will likely lead to a significant decrease in the number of American military

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<sup>7</sup> Nakanishi, Hiroshi, "The Emerging Political and Security Order in Asia-Pacific: A Japanese Perspective," *The U.S. and Japan in Asia* (Conference Papers), November 1994, p. 16.

forces permanently stationed in East Asia. An American withdrawal from South Korea would likely take place during (perhaps as a confidence building measure between North and South Korea) or after the unification process is complete.

As mentioned in Chapter IV, a great deal of domestic pressure against maintaining a military presence in Korea seems certain in the face of unification. Even without a unified Korea and at the height of the Cold War, as early as the Ford and Carter Administrations, troop withdrawals from South Korea were seriously contemplated.<sup>8</sup> Given the sentiment expressed in Chapter IV by Johnson, as well as Ellings and Olsen, the future of American military forces on the Korean Peninsula is very much in doubt. If so many in the United States are willing to consider troop cuts on the Korean Peninsula (including the current administration) while it is divided, how much support would survive for a military presence when the peninsula is united?

The rationale for American military forces in Japan includes the defense of South Korea. The domestic pressure that would question the commitment of American forces on the Korean Peninsula might also question the logic of permanently stationing military forces in Japan (perhaps long before Korea is unified). Additionally, it is probably unwise to assume pressure for an American withdrawal from Japan could only come from the United States. While there is widespread support for the American military presence in Japan today, it is quite possible many Japanese might begin to question the utility of such a presence in the future. As mentioned in the previous chapter, if the American people

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<sup>8</sup> Steinberg, p. 119.



began to see their troops in Japan as "mercenaries," some Japanese might begin to see them as the "watchdog that watches them."<sup>9</sup>

A key concern for Japan would be the size and capability of a unified Korean military. In addition, Japan might watch closely how many 'North Korean' officers find their way into this new military. According to the *Republic of Korea Defense White Paper 1993-94*, South Korea has over 655,000 personnel in uniform while North Korea has over one million.<sup>10</sup> It seems sensible that a unified Korea would make large-scale cuts in its military and use the 'peace dividend' toward economic development in the North. However, some regional concerns could slow military cuts or inhibit them from going as deep as they might go. For instance, a reduced United States military presence might be seen by Korean leaders as a destabilizing factor for East Asia and cause them to 'hedge their bets.' In a similar vein, Japanese concern over a smaller American presence could lead them to change the size or structure of their military in ways the Koreans might see as threatening. It is paradoxical that the United States is asking Japan to play a larger role in its own defense and regional security, much to the dismay of South Korea.<sup>11</sup> A unified Korea might view a larger Japanese security role as threatening and cause them to look carefully at the cuts they make in their military. In addition, a rise in extreme nationalism on the Korean Peninsula could be an inhibiting factor to the leaders of Korea in their efforts to cut deep into the military. The seeds of a strong nationalist movement would seem to be present in a unified Korea: continued economic success; Korean pride over

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<sup>9</sup> Pyle, pp. 137-138.

<sup>10</sup> *Republic of Korea Defense White Paper 1993-1994* (The Ministry of National Defense, 1994), p. 78.

<sup>11</sup> Kreisberg, Chiu, Kahan, p. 13.

unification and becoming a 'normal' state; and the existence of a potential adversary in Japan (especially given the anti-Japanese component to Korean nationalism).

While an American withdrawal is by no means certain at this point, there would seem to be plenty of incentives for a unified Korea and Japan to make such a scenario part of their long-term planning. In addition to possible domestic pressure for withdrawal, many believe the ability of the United States to influence events in East Asia is on the decline. Similarly, even if it were able to do so politically, the United States might not be able to afford a large military presence in East Asia in the future. If American forces leave both South Korea and Japan, this would seem to be a most tempting occasion for both countries to take measures to guarantee their own security, regardless of how their neighbors view it. For a unified Korea, this might mean continuing to modernize its military or not making the deep cuts it might make with a strong American military presence in the region. For Japan, this might mean increasing the size or changing the structure of the SDF to take on the role as the ultimate guarantor of Japan's security.

In summary, uncertainty caused by a reduced American presence that would almost certainly occur with Korean unification and the presence of sizable military forces in China and a unified Korea could cause Japan to realize that ultimately it can only depend on itself for national defense. I do not believe such a move by Japan would signal the return to its militarist past. Rather, for better or for worse, this would signal that Japan had come to the perhaps overdue realization that it must pursue its own security policy. Now this chapter will look at another area, China, where Japan might consider pursuing policies it believes are in its interest but perhaps conflict with the United States.

### C. THE DYNAMICS OF A 'WEAK' CHINA

Some believe China is destined to become the most powerful country in Asia or the world. I tend to agree with this forecast in the long-term. However, this is obviously still very much an open question. What issues might stand in the way of China becoming the dominant power in Asia or the world? China could become very distracted from its position in Asia if the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989 proved to be the first in a series of incidents of social unrest because of political repression or official corruption. Some argue that while Chinese leaders publicly speak out against corruption and prosecute some involved in illegal activities, they are wary of giving corruption too much publicity. This is perhaps because the leadership has vested interests which might conflict with a vigorous campaign against corruption. However, there might be another factor that concerns them. Specifically, corruption was one of the rallying cries that was part of the protests leading up to the incident at Tiananmen Square.<sup>12</sup> From a broader point of view, another question that must be answered is how long can China's economic expansion continue at its present rate? An argument can be made that periods of rapid industrialization have often proved to be quite turbulent. Others see potential signs of weakness (or at least much slower growth) in China's need to curtail central planning of its economy. In *Asia 2020: The Future Asian Security Environment*, "three bottlenecks" are mentioned which must be overcome for China to continue its steady economic growth: "China needs 1) a national private financial system to raise capital, 2) a privatized rail and truck transportation infrastructure, and 3) more efficient government-run enterprises to improve its long-term

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<sup>12</sup> "The Politics of Corruption," *The Economist*, 20 May 1995, p. 33.

growth rate.”<sup>13</sup> Some observers, such as Jack Goldstone, believe Chinese leaders are in for very tough times ahead. “China shows every sign of a country approaching crisis: a burgeoning population and mass migration amid faltering agricultural production and worker and peasant discontent--and all this as the state rapidly loses its capacity to rule effectively.”<sup>14</sup> If China were unable to translate its economic growth into a strong centralized government, what would this mean for the security relationship between the United States and Japan? I believe that if China is ‘weak’ or splintered into regional power centers (perhaps around areas of economic growth) this would present a scenario ripe for conflict between the United States and Japan.

I believe it is likely this conflict could center around disagreements between the United States and Japan over the appropriate policy toward China. In such a scenario, if the relative power and influence of the United States in East Asia continued to decline, Japan would seek to play a more active role in regional issues. In other words, Japan would play the role that is ‘normal’ for an economic superpower. In playing a more active role in the region, Japan could come into conflict with the United States over such issues as human rights and trade policy. This century provides several examples where the United States and Japan conflicted over their policy toward China. Examples range from miscalculations made by both sides as Japan became involved in China in the 1930’s to the ‘Nixon Shocks’ of the 1970s.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> *Asia 2020: The Future Asian Security Environment*, Office of the Secretary of Defense, September 1993, p. 20.

<sup>14</sup> Goldstone, Jack A., “The Coming Chinese Collapse,” *Foreign Policy*, Summer 1995, p. 51.

<sup>15</sup> Oksenberg, Michel, “China and the Japanese-American Alliance,” in Curtis, pp. 103-104.

Michel Oksenberg argues that both countries have a history of misguided policy toward China, partially because of intelligence failures. He points out that when selecting the appropriate policy toward China, both Japan and the United States have underestimated nationalist tendencies in favor of regionalism that existed. He cites the Japanese belief that they could back individual warlords in the 1930s to get what they wanted out of China and the ideas of some American strategists during the 1945-50 civil war that believed China could be divided in northern and southern political entities. While regionalism and factionalism have always existed in China, Oksenberg warns that "Chinese history honors those who unified the far-flung empire, while those who prompted its disintegration are scorned and reviled." Both countries also overestimated their ability to influence political development in China; "Leaders who were thought to be 'pro-American or 'pro-Japanese,' or even 'pro-Soviet,' proved to be primarily 'pro-Chinese.'" Both countries have overestimated the value of the Chinese market in commercial terms. Oksenberg points out that while many turned a profit, those intoxicated with "images of a nearly limitless number of consumers" did not accurately predict difficulties associated with exploiting such a market (a remark consistent with the "bottlenecks" mentioned at the beginning of this section). Both the United States and Japan have misjudged Chinese military intentions and capabilities. Specifically, they have "underestimated Chinese willingness to use force and to absorb huge losses on the battlefield in order to damage an adversary." Finally, Oksenberg argues that both have conflicted with China because they misunderstood "Chinese interests and intentions in the regions that Beijing considers core

to China's security (Vietnam or Korea) or that it believes to be part of Chinese territory (Taiwan, Manchuria, and Tibet)."<sup>16</sup>

Human rights policy toward China may prove to be one area ripe for disagreements between Japan and the United States. Japan is clearly much less interested in pursuing a tough human rights policy with China. Unlike the United States, Japan was reluctant to sanction China after the incident in Tiananmen Square in 1989. Part of this can be attributed to the fact that the Japanese find it easier to separate economics and politics. However, I believe it is more complex than this. First, some Japanese realize China is too big and too close to alienate over matters such as human rights. Second, the Japanese find it easier to accept explanations by Chinese leaders who assert that they are more concerned about raising their citizen's standard of living than ensuring human rights. Third, the emergence of a nationwide 'civil society' in China seems to be necessary before any true democracy can take hold. Given Japan's proximity to China, the Japanese might be quite uninterested to press for more political liberalization if its price is instability.<sup>17</sup> Japanese leaders need only observe what is happening in Russia to be convinced of the benefits of stability in China.

While Japan seems inclined to pursue a typically pragmatic line with China, United States policy toward China has a highly ideological component which results in a more confrontational relationship with Beijing (as well as other countries such as Singapore, Indonesia, and Malaysia). While American relations with China may have warmed

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., pp. 106-108.

<sup>17</sup> Endo, Seiji, "Prospects of Cooperation Between the United States and Japan for the Post-Cold War Era in the Field of Human Rights and Other Social Values," *The U.S. and Japan in Asia* (Conference Papers), University of California Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, November 1994, p. 24.

because of China's assistance with problems on the Korean Peninsula and the apparent cooperation on intellectual property rights, it was not long ago that the United States was threatening to withhold most-favored-nation (MFN) status and National Security Advisor Anthony Lake characterized China as a 'backlash state' along with countries like Iran, Iraq, and North Korea. It is difficult to imagine similar Japanese government officials making such statements.<sup>18</sup> If China's human rights record falls short of international expectations and the United States takes a more hard line with China, such as revoking most-favored-nation status, it could result in a breach in the relationship between Japan and the United States as Japanese leaders pursue a policy they consider more suitable. An argument can be made that holding China's MFN status hostage is not necessarily in the interest of either the United States or China. After all, if the United States takes away MFN or, more seriously, enacts a trade embargo, what leverage remains for the United States to exploit? Unless there is widespread international compliance on such sanctions, China would simply seek out alternate trading partners. All too often, it seems that when the United States imposes sanctions, this simply allows competing firms in other countries to conduct trade previously done by American firms. Furthermore, when the United States implements trade sanctions, this seems to be a powerful incentive for countries such as China to find a more reliable source of those goods for the long-term. The deterioration of relations between the United States and China, perhaps due to sanctions or embargoes, would serve to increase tensions in the region and force Japan (and other regional allies) to assess the value of close ties with the United States if it brings about unwanted (and avoidable in their minds) conflict with China. As Alan Romberg argues,

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<sup>18</sup> Oksenberg, p. 100.

“What is now viewed as uncertain American leadership would be viewed as unreliable posturing, based on ill-conceived notions of national interest.”<sup>19</sup>

One factor that could exacerbate differences between the United States and Japan is the perception that China is being unfairly singled out by the United States for its human rights problems. Throughout Asia, many see that China’s economy is increasingly run on principles friendly to American capitalism. On the other hand, Russia is now a ‘democratic’ country which is becoming more and more autocratic and has a less than ideal human rights record. However, many in Asia believe the United States treats Russia more fairly and more patiently than China.<sup>20</sup> This could prove to be particularly annoying to Japanese leaders who fear the resurgence of Russia as a Pacific power.

The Japanese willingness to see Chinese points of view extends beyond human rights issues. While some in the Japanese government see issues that merit serious concern, such as the growth of the Chinese military or its activities in the South China Sea, Japan seems much less willing than the United States to expend political capital on issues such as Tibetan independence or Taiwan’s international status. Furthermore, with the end of the Cold War the United States has tended to de-emphasize the strategic importance of China. Compared with Japan, the United States has had fewer high level contacts with China in recent years. Indeed, some suggest that in the wake of Tiananmen, “While Tokyo treated China with dignity and respect, Washington ceased doing so.”<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Romberg, Alan D., “The United States and Japan in Asia: The Challenge of Security,” *The U.S. and Japan in Asia* (Conference Papers), University of California Institute on Global Conflict and Cooperation, November 1994, p. 12.

<sup>20</sup> Endo, p. 21.

<sup>21</sup> Oksenberg, p. 99.



As mentioned, trade issues also seem to have the potential to drive a wedge between the United States and Japan. The most cursory glance at recent headlines gives testimony to the degree to which trade can be a divisive issue in the relations between states (even the closest of allies). At times, the casual viewer might listen to the rhetoric of American and Japanese trade representatives and wonder if there were living on the same planet. China has also been the target of American scrutiny on trade issues--most recently in the area of intellectual property rights. If trade issues continue to be as contentious as they are now, one could envision the day when China and Japan strike an agreement to stand up to what Tokyo and Beijing see as unreasonable trade demands by the United States.

Trade disputes in East Asia are not recent developments. As mentioned in Chapter III, the Nixon-Sato talks in 1969 and the 'voluntary restraints' imposed on Japan proved to be a sign of things to come. In more recent years, President George Bush traveled to Japan with American business leaders in tow in search of 'fair' trade. The Clinton administration has had an especially aggressive, though perhaps not coherent, trade policy. For instance, an editorial in *The New Republic* pointed out that Undersecretary of the Treasury Lawrence Summers, while testifying before Congress, preached the virtues of free trade and rejected that the administration sought to 'manage trade.' Instead he argued that the administration would seek "better market access, not specific trade." At the same hearing, Undersecretary of Commerce Jeffrey Garten voiced his support for the free trade testimony given by Summers but went on to call for an increase in Japanese purchases of American automobile parts and stated; "In all these areas, it was an essential

part of our proposal that there be concrete commitments and that those commitments be measurable.” Obviously, *The New Republic* is well known for relishing inconsistent statements by public officials, but the reader is left wondering at the difference between ‘measurable commitments’ and ‘specific market outcomes.’<sup>22</sup> In the same article, the editors argued that the Clinton administration has allowed Japan to maneuver into the unlikely role of the defender of free trade:

The problem with Clinton’s trade policy, then, is not merely its noted irony--that in the name of free trade we seek to manage trade. The problem is that the irony is concrete; Clinton actually aids the forces that have long kept Japan’s trade so meticulously and destructively managed. And the issue goes beyond Hosokawa. Whoever is in power, Clinton’s trade demands--in their Kantoresque stridency, and in their aspects of micromanagement--will tend to alienate our natural allies, Japanese consumers, and push our enemies, the bureaucrats, toward center stage.<sup>23</sup>

It hardly seems a stretch to assume that as China continues to industrialize it will produce goods that will come into competition with those produced in the United States. In fact, last year China announced a plan for the production of automobiles--perhaps the most sensitive individual trade item to the United States--which appeared to be modeled to replicate the rapid rise of the Japanese and Korean automobile industry in past decades.<sup>24</sup> In short, while American trade disputes with China have not yet become as divisive as those with Japan, clearly the seeds of such a disagreement seem to be present.

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<sup>22</sup> “Looking East,” *The New Republic*, 18 April 1994, p. 9.

<sup>23</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 10.

<sup>24</sup> Dentzer, Susan, “Oceans of Cars, an Ocean Away,” *U.S. News & World Report*, 5 June 1995, p. 49.

How would disagreements between the United States and Japan over human rights or trade policies toward China serve to make Japan more 'normal?' The transformation would come about as a result of Japan pursuing its own 'China policy,' instead of following the lead of the United States. Once Japan begins to truly exercise an independent foreign policy, the rationale for a security agreement with the United States would likely be undermined--especially if Japan and the United States were often at odds with one another.

#### **D. THE DYNAMICS OF INCREASED REGIONALISM**

Another situation which might force Japan to become 'normal' would be the emergence of an East Asian trading bloc. This seems unlikely in the short-term for obvious reasons: Japan depends on the United States for its security guarantee; both the United States and many states in East Asia benefit from the trade they conduct throughout the world. However, in the long-term this may become an option that East Asian leaders might need to consider, perhaps to counter the rise of strong trading blocs in Western Europe as well as North and South America. Indeed, an argument can be made that this is the direction in which the world is headed. Though integration in the European Union is not moving along as quickly as some Europeans would like, in historical terms it is making steady progress. Similarly, while some in North America are uncomfortable with the North American Free Trade Area (NAFTA), the recent addition of Mexico (to what was the United States-Canada Free Trade Area) and the consideration of Chile as a prospective member are signs of increased regionalism in the Western Hemisphere. In addition, there are about two dozen less well-known (and varying in success) preferential

trade arrangements such as the Andean Common Market (ANCOM), the Southern African Customs Union (SACU), and, of course, ASEAN.

Given that there are so many such arrangements, it is interesting to note that the conventional wisdom among economists is that these preferential trading regimes are not clearly beneficial to the individual participants and almost certainly not beneficial to worldwide free trade as a whole. The reduction of tariffs among members of a trading arrangement will likely cause some states to buy goods from their fellow members which they might not have because of tariffs on those goods. This is referred to as *trade creation*. However, some states might begin to buy goods from member states which previously they had purchased from nonmembers at the most competitive price. If tariffs are maintained on the goods of nonmembers, it might be cheaper for a state to buy from a member (without a tariff) when some nonmember actually has the lower price. This is called *trade diversion* and is generally considered detrimental to free trade. In the instances where such trade arrangements are believed to be beneficial (to the member states, not the world as a whole), trade creation outpaces trade diversion.<sup>25</sup>

With this in mind, why are there so many of these trade arrangements and what motivates states to join them? There actually several reasons. First, the 'trade-diverting' arrangements are often enthusiastically supported by those industries that ultimately gain, and vigorously lobby for, the trade regime. On the other hand, the 'injury' caused by trade diversion is often spread so thin that it provokes little objection among the those who ultimately pay the cost--the consumers. Second, some states, such as those in Western

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<sup>25</sup> Fieleke, Norman S., "One Trading World, or Many: The Issue of Regional Trading Blocs," *New England Economic Review*, May/June 1992, p. 7.

Europe, have promoted economic integration as a means of political stability. Third, some of these arrangements are born out of frustration that the initiatives of the General Agreement of Trade and Tariffs (GATT) are moving too slowly. While absolutely free trade would be best, states find themselves living in a world where something quite short of the ideal actually exists. States might prefer to eliminate trade barriers but are not willing to do so if it means other states will 'free ride' or fail to reciprocate by eliminating their own barriers. Finally, once a preferential trade arrangement has been formed, many states will join simply because they do not want to be 'left out.'<sup>26</sup>

In such an atmosphere, given its economic strength, it might be 'normal' for Japan to be a leader in this type of regional movement. While many in East Asia would strongly oppose Japanese leadership, some have given signs that they would welcome it--especially in Southeast Asia. In 1990, Malaysian Prime Minister Mohamed Mahatir proposed the East Asian Economic Group (later changed to the East Asian Economic Caucus or EAEC) which excluded participation by the United States, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand. The United States opposed the creation of EAEC and Japan officially downplayed the idea, though there was some support for it unofficially. Mahatir and others (in Vietnam or the Philippines) have expressed displeasure at Tokyo's unwillingness to depart from Washington's foreign policy line when they believe it might be in Japan's interest to do so (such as in the failure to show support for EAEC).<sup>27</sup> An argument can be made that political and military ties in the region (with Japanese leadership) would just be validating what already exists economically. If Japan were to play such a role, this might

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid., p. 9-10.

<sup>27</sup> Morrison, Charles E., "Southeast Asia and U.S.-Japan Relations," in Curtis, p. 157.

conflict with the present security relationship because Japan would not want to be the economic 'elder brother' to others in East Asia while the 'younger brother' to the United States in security matters.

On the extreme end of this argument (toward regionalism) is the possibility that the various regions could become so competitive that they would begin to see each other as political adversaries. Funabashi Yoichi has discussed the possibility of a new Cold War between the American and Japanese models of capitalism. Funabashi believes such conflict would revolve around five basic themes:

1) status: Japan is likely to overtake America economically by the turn of the century; 2) ideology, or one model of capitalism versus another; 3) power, or what is to be the division of labor in the Global Partnership; 4) regional influence, or whether Japan should try to create a new Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere to balance the single market in Europe and the North American Free Trade Area; and 5) difference in American and Japanese relations with the former Soviet republics and China, including whether the G-7 democracies will support Japan's claims to the Northern Territories now that the Cold War is over, and whether a renewal of the democracy movement in China would swell Western sympathies and undercut Japan's appeasement of the current regime.<sup>28</sup>

As mentioned before, the emergence of a regional trading bloc in East Asia still requires a great deal of speculation. For instance, if Japan were to emphasize a desire to be the leader in East Asia to the exclusion of all others, Japan would risk alienating the very Western countries which contain the lucrative markets on which its economy was built and continues to thrive. This would be a quite a risk to take considering the large amount of exports Japan sends to the United States. However, some relief might be found

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<sup>28</sup> Quoted in Johnson, "Japan in Search of a 'Normal' Role, p. 5.

if Japan's neighbors continue to industrialize and perhaps create demand for goods that Japan presently exports primarily to the United States.

#### **E. A SYSTEMIC VIEW: DANGEROUS DISEQUALIBRIUM**

What can we learn from a systemic view of the above scenarios? Without being redundant, as with the previous chapter, these scenarios can only be understood in the context of the United States as the dominant power which has experienced relative decline in the past few decades and is attempting to reduce the costs of maintaining the international system. However, the focus of this chapter has been Japan becoming 'normal.' Gilpin's second assumption is useful in describing this scenario: states change the international system when the expected gains exceed the expected costs of doing so. With regard to the reunification of the Korean Peninsula, Japan would seek to change the rules of the system (which have until then prohibited Japan from becoming a leader in regional security) because it sees that option as the best opportunity to maintain its own security. With regard to the 'weak China' and regional trading bloc scenarios, Japan would see an opportunity to exercise greater influence in the region. What was unthinkable two decades ago, to reject American leadership in the region, would now appear plausible in view of the relative changes in the distribution of power between the United States and Japan.

Gilpin's fifth assumption is also relevant to these scenarios: when a disequilibrium occurs between a state's distribution of power and the rules of the system, the international system will be changed to reflect that new distribution of power. Gilpin describes this as the point in which war is likely to occur. As a result, this would be a

period of potentially great conflict between the United States and Japan. As mentioned before, the dynamics of a 'weak China' and of increased regionalism would seem to hold the seeds of such conflict between the United States and Japan if the two states begin to see their own interests diverge from the other. I believe the dynamics of a unified Korea could present more conflicts of interest. If the United States were to pursue a policy of supporting the Korean Peninsula to build a strong 'buffer' state (as Chalmers Johnson has suggested), then this could be viewed in Tokyo as threatening (or at least not in its interest) and subsequently cause friction between the United States and Japan.

However, if a strong and unified Korea were to pursue policies which both the United States and Japan viewed as threatening, this might make Japan become 'normal' and seek to remain closely allied with the United States at the same time. A situation where a strong and unified Korea was dominated by a strong and resurgent China is one set of circumstances which might cause the United States and Japan to redouble their efforts to maintain the security relationship. The dynamics of a 'strong China' were purposely avoided in this chapter because this is where we now turn our discussion.



## VI. SCENARIO THREE: A REGIONAL THREAT 'RESCUES' THE ALLIANCE

### A. THE CASE FOR CHINA

Currently, much of the debate in the literature on East Asia surrounds the issue of China's future role in Asia. In my opinion, this is a debate worth having because I believe China's future is *the* central question facing East Asia in the decades to come. While it is still very much an open question, a strong case can be made that China will someday emerge as the most powerful country in Asia or perhaps the world. If China were to rise into such a position, I believe this could be adverse to the interests of the United States and Japan and serve to reinvigorate their security relationship.

What evidence is there that China might become the world's next superpower? To begin with, when considering China's future, it is not its political strength which inspires people to call China a superpower in the making. Rather, it is China's growth in economic power, and subsequently military strength, which holds so much promise. Indeed, the Deng Xiaoping reforms which began in the late 1970s have led to impressive economic growth in recent years. Almost two decades after those reforms, by some accounts, the Chinese economy continues to produce double-digit growth rates.<sup>1</sup> While it seems unlikely China will catch the United States in terms of per capita gross national product

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<sup>1</sup> Roy, Denny, "Hegemon on the Horizon? China's Threat to East Asian Security," *International Security*, Summer 1994, p. 152; "Not So Miraculous?" *The Economist*, 27 May 1995, pp. 32-33. While all observers note China's impressive growth rates, it is the source of some controversy. For instance, Roy mentions commonly cited growth rates as high as of 12.8% and 13.4% in 1992 and 1993 respectively. *The Economist* article argues Chinese officials have downplayed inflation in recent years and that China's growth rates are somewhat lower. Instead of the officially cited figures of 13.4% in 1993 and 11.8% in 1994, they believe the growth rates were *only* 9% and 7.8% respectively. Ironically, the article argues that these lower growth rates bode well for the long-term health of China as it is a sign that the economy is less likely to 'overheat' in the future.

(GNP) or match the American standard-of-living in the foreseeable future, it seems quite possible that China could exceed the United States in terms of absolute GNP with moderate growth rates, thereby making it the largest economy in the world. In fact, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) already reports that China's economy is the third largest in the world.<sup>2</sup>

This economic success has given China an opportunity to dedicate more resources to its military. Like China's economic growth, making proclamations about the size and scope of Chinese military expenditures requires caution. On the one hand, China reportedly doubled its defense budget from 1990 to 1994 and has acquired relatively modern weapons and technology from Russia such as an in-flight refueling capability, modern fighter aircraft, surface-to-air missiles, heavy transport aircraft, and missile guidance technology.<sup>3</sup> Despite this, it may be too soon to assert that China is involved in an 'arms race,' though the seeds of such an event probably exist in East Asia. In fact, some scholars assert too much is made of China's military build-up and characterize these expenditures as efforts to modernize a "backward" military which is still structurally best suited to defend itself from a Russian invasion rather than project power abroad.<sup>4</sup> Whatever the case, it seems evident China has enhanced its military capabilities in recent years. It has probably done so for a variety of reasons. First, the Gulf War of 1991 demonstrated to many states around the world that Western military technology and equipment was superior to that produced in Russia. Second, as mentioned earlier, there

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<sup>2</sup> Roy, p. 152.

<sup>3</sup> Sutter, Robert G., James Casey Sullivan and Shirley Kan, "China as a Security Concern in Asia: Perceptions, Assessment and U.S. Options," *Congressional Research Service Report for Congress*, 22 December 1994, p. 10.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., p. 16.

were increased opportunities to modernize the military because of China's impressive economic growth. A third, and perhaps most important, reason has also been discussed in earlier chapters. Specifically, China's desire to increase its military capabilities can probably be attributed to the fact that the political and economic power of the United States has declined (in relative terms) in recent decades and left the region with some uncertainty about the future.<sup>5</sup>

## **B. CHINA AS A REGIONAL HEGEMON?**

What would a 'strong' China mean to the dynamics of East Asia? I believe it would provide plenty of opportunities for conflicts of interest between China on one side and the United States and Japan on the other. If China were to decide that its interests were best served by pursuing hegemony in the region, this would conflict with stated American security objectives in East Asia. In February 1995, the Department of Defense published the *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region* which states that part of the rationale for maintaining forward-deployed American military forces is to "discourage the emergence of a regional hegemon."<sup>6</sup> As mentioned in Chapter IV, Chalmers Johnson seems to be arguing in a similar vein when he calls for the United States to support Vietnam and the Korea Peninsula as 'buffers' against the growing strength of China. Unfortunately, it seems unlikely China would see such moves as friendly or even neutral. Scholars such as Michel Oksenberg point out that China (strong or weak) has traditionally seen these same countries as areas of great interest in terms of security and sought to exercise influence over them.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Buzan and Segal, pp. 8-10.

<sup>6</sup> *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*, p. 23.

<sup>7</sup> Oksenberg, pp. 106-108.

However, it is interesting to note that one of these 'buffer' areas seems to be experiencing some "alliance uncertainty" (see page 2 above). This uncertainty, over the presence of a number of states that have the possibility to be friend or foe, seems to have produced confusion which has manifested itself in the recent conflicting or incoherent security positions taken by the ASEAN states. Members of ASEAN (as well as Vietnam) are some of the states most concerned about the implications of a 'strong' China in the future. On the one hand, some of the states of Southeast Asia are more open to a larger Japanese role (albeit, in the context of a continued American presence) in regional security--despite past abuses. For instance, countries such as Thailand have suggested joint Thai-Japanese naval exercises. Other Southeast Asian states, such as Indonesia and Singapore, have voiced support for increased Japanese involvement in security issues (i.e., United Nations peacekeeping operations) in sharp contrast to other states such as North and South Korea or China.<sup>8</sup> However, while these states proclaim support for such developments in the context of an American military presence in the region, they have sent sometimes mixed signals about the benefits of having those same Americans 'in their own back yard.' Examples of these mixed signals include the failure of the Philippine Senate in 1991 to approve the treaty which would have kept an American presence in the Philippines or the more recent refusal of Thailand to allow the United States to station supply ships off its coast. The reasons for such actions are probably too complex to fully discuss here but both events seemed to involve domestic politics and Thailand's decision might have reflected its concern over how Beijing might view the move.<sup>9</sup> However, I

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<sup>8</sup> Pyle, p.144.

<sup>9</sup> "Who Else Will Guard the Pacific?" *The Economist*, 3 December 1994, pp. 43-44.

believe that if China becomes increasingly strong and aggressive, at least some of these 'buffer states' will be more open to cooperation in efforts to deter Chinese aggression. In short, in a 'strong China' scenario, the present uncertainty and mixing of signals will turn out to be a temporary and passing phenomenon.

How China views itself could make this conflict of interest even more acute. Buzan and Segal assert China does not see itself as a 'status quo' power. Chinese history over the past 150 years is full of events in which China suffered humiliation at the hands of 'foreign devils.' These events began in earnest with the Treaty of Nanjing which ended the Opium War with the British in 1842; the 'unequal treaties' which followed; the attempts of various outsiders to carve out their own sphere of influence at China's expense; and of course, the brutal occupation of Chinese territory by the Japanese during the 1930s and 1940s. The status of Hong Kong and Taiwan serve as constant reminders of this past. As a result, Buzan and Segal believe China feels justified in making changes to the international system (such as 'reclaiming' lost territory) which benefit itself regardless of the outcry it may cause in the international community.<sup>10</sup>

In fact, an argument can be made that recent Chinese behavior in East Asia is a sign of things to come. As mentioned, though exact capabilities are open to debate, China appears to have enhanced its military considerably in the past few years. In addition, China seems willing to use this enhanced military capability to assert itself vis-à-vis its territorial claims in the region. The Territorial Waters Law put forward by China in February 1992 is the source of some concern. This law asserts China's long-held claim to various islands in East Asia, including islands also claimed by a number of countries

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<sup>10</sup> Buzan and Segal, p. 6.

(including Japan). It also specifically states China's right to 'repel invaders' from Chinese territory.<sup>11</sup> This is an interesting notion considering Oksenberg's assertion that other countries have often failed to understand what Beijing considered Chinese territory. With a great deal of symbolism (and perhaps not coincidentally), this law was proclaimed shortly after the United States announced its intention to leave the Philippines. On the heels of this proclamation, the People's Liberation Army's Navy (PLAN) put troops ashore on Da Lac Reef in the Spratlys as if to show its resolve. China's aggressive attitude toward an "oil exploration zone" claimed by Vietnam is also of concern to some in East Asia. Of particular interest is the fact that Beijing issued an American oil company the right to develop this area and assured the firm that the PLAN would protect its operations toward that end.<sup>12</sup>

More recently, after bilateral talks between China and the Philippines in March 1995 proved fruitless, the situation in the Spratlys seems to have intensified. The Philippines removed or destroyed Chinese perimeter markers near some atolls and reefs in what Manila claims as its territorial waters. Vietnam, which also has claims in the area, voiced support for the position of the Philippines and has been critical of China's actions. The Philippines is particularly upset by shelters (presumably for Chinese fishermen) erected at a location known as Mischief Reef and has seized Chinese fishing boats citing illegal fishing practices. Some have suggested that China is testing the resolve of the United States in an attempt to learn how committed the United States is to its Mutual

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<sup>11</sup> Kreisberg, Chiu, and Kahan, p. 4.

<sup>12</sup> Hiramatsu, Shigeo, "China's Naval Advance: Objectives and Capabilities," *Japan Review of International Affairs*, Spring 1994, p. 118.

Defense Treaty with the Philippines.<sup>13</sup> To date, the United States has avoided taking a position on the Spratly dispute other than to ask that the matter be resolved peacefully. While this is probably still speculation, it causes one to wonder if China would be so aggressive if a huge American naval installation was still located at Subic Bay.

Are these the first probing steps of a China wishing to exercise hegemony in East Asia? If so, what does this mean? As mentioned above, present United States policy is to prevent another state from exercising hegemony in East Asia. In a broad sense, this is because the United States would not like any power in East Asia (be it China, Russia, or Japan) to exercise so much power that it could threaten (either directly or in the form of regional instability) the increasingly extensive commercial ties that America has in the region.

It is not difficult to envision circumstances in which Chinese hegemony might be detrimental to the interests of Japan.<sup>14</sup> First, in light of the amount of money spent on development in Asia, an aggressive China might threaten Japan's position as the economic leader in the region. If the United States prospers from stability in the region, Japan absolutely depends on it. Second, if part of a strong China is a 'blue water' navy, this might prove quite uncomfortable for Japan--an island nation whose economic success is dependent on resources in far away places.

The emergence of Chinese hegemony has a third dimension for Japan to consider. Specifically, how much influence would a 'strong' China hold over key neighbors such as

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<sup>13</sup> Tasker, Rodney, "A Line in the Sand," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 6 April 95, pp. 14-16.

<sup>14</sup> However, as long as China does not act too aggressive or hostile, it is possible Japan might find a way to live comfortably with Chinese hegemony. For instance, if China offered to play the role that the United States currently does, this might seem attractive to Japan (as well as others in East Asia such as the Koreans). Another possibility would be a Japanese-Chinese 'bigemony' in the region.

North, South, or a unified Korea. The history of Asia has precedents where China played the 'elder brother' to the Korean Peninsula. Historicism aside, Koreans and Chinese have some practical reasons to pursue good relations with each other. First, South Korea might be well-suited to assist in what is probably the most difficult challenge facing China in the future; specifically, China would like to reform enough to fulfill predictions that it will be the world's leading economic power without going through the ordeal taking place in Russia. The way in which South Korea achieved its economic success, with a strong authoritarian element, might seem attractive to many Chinese leaders. Some suggest this is already taking place: "China after the 14th Party Congress of 1992 has a political economy that is structurally similar to that of Park Chung Hee's Korea--authoritarian politics combined with market economics."<sup>15</sup> Second, leaders in China and on the Korean Peninsula might share concern over Japan's position in the region. As mentioned previously, these concerns would likely grow acute if events (such as a decreased American military presence in East Asia) led to an increase in Japanese military and political power in the region. Third, if the Koreans were to unify and that unification occurred because of China's 'good offices,' this would likely lead to close relations between Beijing and (presumably) Seoul. This event itself would signal Korea was in the process of aligning itself with China and could probably only happen in a 'strong' China scenario.

### **C. A RESURGENT RUSSIA?**

Up to this point, I have only mentioned China as the possible threat that would reinvigorate the security relationship between the United States and Japan. However,

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<sup>15</sup> Johnson, "Rethinking Asia," p. 20.



Russia played that role for over four decades this century. Could Russia do so again? It seems unlikely in the short or medium-term future. Russia must overcome some daunting problems at home before it could become the dominant power in East Asia. In addition to severe economic problems, Russia has the potential for political instability on issues ranging from Moscow power struggles to more fundamental problems such as regions which wish to secede from Russia. There seem to be more than enough issues to keep Russia focused westward. What time Russian leaders do have to look outside their borders might be used to attempt to maintain stability in the former Soviet republics in Central Asia. However, it would seem unwise to dismiss the idea that Russia could reemerge as a major player in East Asia in the long-term. After all, Russia *is* an Asian power which borders China and North Korea and holds territory adjacent to Japan. If Russia were to grow strong again, it seems logical that it would wish to exert influence in East Asia. Though such a turn of events might be decades away, if it were to happen this could act to reinvigorate (or perhaps reestablish) the security relationship between the United States and Japan. Beyond the current issues which are a source of friction between Russia and Japan, such as the Kurile Islands, Japan might feel threatened if Russia were able to exercise influence in areas such as the Korean Peninsula or Manchuria (in a 'weak' China scenario) as it has in the past.

#### **D. 'RESCUING' THE SECURITY RELATIONSHIP**

If the security relationship between the United States and Japan cannot last long as currently structured, how would a 'strong' China (or Russia) 'rescue' it? After all, given the seeds of discontent in the security relationship mentioned in Chapters IV and V, why

would the circumstances outlined in this chapter reinvigorate the relationship? Is this just another scenario where regional dynamics cause Japan to become 'normal' and threaten its security arrangement with the United States? I believe this scenario to be quite different from those in previous chapters because it contains a common threat (ultimately the best glue for holding an alliance together) that makes the rationale for strong security ties between the United States and Japan more obvious. This would address one of the most pressing problems mentioned in previous scenarios--restating or redefining the underlying logic or purpose of the relationship.

Given the seemingly petty conflicts that have plagued the United States and Japan in recent years, it might seem the relationship is headed in the opposite direction from where it would need to go to meet the threat of an aggressive China. In the Introduction to this thesis, I mentioned Emily Goldman's concept of "threat uncertainty" or the "absence of the prior, traditional, or familiar threat pattern, or the absence of a clearly defined threat." With regard to the security relationship between the United States and Japan, this uncertainty seems to have manifest itself in the form of disagreements or friction on issues such as equitable burdensharing or 'fair trade.' Despite this, I believe that a strong and aggressive China would serve to smooth out some of the contentious issues between the two countries by providing 'threat certainty.'

However, as mentioned earlier, I do not believe even a threatening China would sustain the security relationship between the United States and Japan in its current form. This is primarily because the relationship still reflects the relative power of the United States and Japan in 1945 instead of 1995. Again, updating the relationship is the topic of

the following chapter but some basic points are worth making. Specifically, at a minimum, the United States must be willing to give Japan a larger role in the leadership of the alliance while Japan must be willing to bear the cost of a security role commensurate with its political and economic power in the region. At a maximum, the relationship could be changed such that Japan takes the lead role on security issues (perhaps in its neighborhood) while the United States works to support Japan.

#### **E. A SYSTEMIC VIEW: THE CONSEQUENCES OF RETRENCHMENT**

Whereas in the previous scenarios Japan was the force of change, in this scenario China moves to change the international system to its advantage. Again, a change in the distribution of power (in China's favor) would cause a disjuncture between China's power (in terms of political, economic, or military strength) and its position in the international system (which the United States shaped when it was the unquestioned power in the region). As a result, China believes it is possible to make changes in the international system (perhaps in the form of influence over the Korean Peninsula, Vietnam, or elsewhere in Southeast Asia) from which it will benefit. It is worth restating that Gilpin believes the most likely period for conflict is when this disjuncture exists between a state's distribution of power capabilities and its status in the international system.

Why would this turn of events foster a close security relationship between the United States and Japan? In classical realist parlance, as China grows stronger and potentially more threatening, the United States and Japan 'balance' against her. Even if the United States remained the most powerful state in the international system, it might not be able to exercise a great deal of influence regionally and choose (as realist

international relations theorists would predict) to join with Japan to balance against China which is the strongest power in East Asia.

Another interesting point Gilpin's work brings to this scenario is that the efforts of the dominant power (currently the United States) to reduce its expenses related to maintaining the international system could cause unintended events to occur. Specifically, efforts by the United States to spend less security resources in Asia unintentionally allows China to fill this security 'vacuum.' When the United States had a much larger security role in East Asia (perhaps in the 1960s) and China was in a shambles economically, China would not have attempted to exert such influence in the region. However, with the United States increasingly unwilling or unable to play as large a security role and with China's economic star on the rise, Chinese dominance in East Asia now at least seems possible to Beijing in this scenario.

As I have stated earlier, if such a scenario were to become a reality in the future, the United States and Japan would *still* need to update the structure of their security relationship to meet to present distribution of power between them. I have often hinted at this concept throughout this thesis and this is now where the discussion will turn.

## **VII. SCENARIO FOUR: UPDATING THE RELATIONSHIP**

A common theme throughout this thesis is that the existing security relationship between the United States and Japan cannot last in the long-term because it is based on the necessities of the Cold War and not the realities of the post-Cold War era. Similarly, I have argued that the United States must be willing to sanction a larger Japanese role in the leadership of the alliance while Japan must be more willing to play a security role commensurate with its political and economic power in the region and the world. From the point of view of the United States, it would like to maintain stability without having to pay the entire cost for doing so. On the other hand, Japan would like to maintain stability but have a say in how this is accomplished. In this chapter, I will explore the possibilities that the security relationship can remain viable for the long-term through efforts by both countries to share the cost and responsibility of leadership on security issues.

One proposed method for sharing the cost and responsibility of regional security which has been warmly embraced by the Clinton administration is the promotion of multilateral security regimes in Asia. While the United States has involved itself in the past with multilateral efforts elsewhere in the world, no such regime emerged in East Asia during the Cold War. In the first section of this chapter, I will assess the likelihood that the United States can change its present security framework in East Asia from a group of bilateral relationships (with Japan, South Korea, the Philippines, and Thailand) into a larger multilateral security regime.

## A. MULTILATERALISM IN EAST ASIA?

As mentioned, the Clinton administration has voiced strong support for multilateral security regimes. President Clinton has called for the creation of "overlapping plates of armor" or "multiple new arrangements to meet multiple new threats." These and other statements designed to promote multilateral security regimes are featured prominently in United States policy statements such as *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement* and *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*.<sup>1</sup>

### 1. Multilateral Options

There are various multilateral possibilities for the United States and East Asia to pursue. Most, but not all, of the approaches emphasize building on existing multilateral tendencies in the region. However, even the most developed propositions are in the formative stage. The first option is to build upon the most advanced multilateral security regime in Asia--the Association of Southeast Asian Nations. ASEAN, which is made up of the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Brunei, Thailand, and Vietnam, was originally established in 1967 to protect against Communist advances in the region. In addition to its seven members, ASEAN has seven dialogue partners: Japan, the United States, South Korea, Canada, Australia, New Zealand and the European Community. Other regional players, such as China, and Russia, have taken part in ASEAN sponsored events such as the Post-Ministerial Conference (PMC), a semi-official forum to discuss issues of regional concern.<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> *A National Security Strategy of Engagement and Enlargement*, The White House, February 1995, pp. 8-9 and 28-29; *United States Security Strategy for the East Asia-Pacific Region*, pp. 11-14.

<sup>2</sup> Cossa, Ralph, ed., *The Japan-U.S. Alliance and Security Regimes in East Asia* (Alexandria VA: The Center for Naval Analysis, 1994), pp. 27-28.

In July 1994, ASEAN held its first meeting of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) in Bangkok. The ARF brought together senior officials from the ASEAN states, the dialogue partners, and officials from other key states in the region. Some see promise in the ARF, not just in the ability to discuss regional security problems, but in other proposed functions such as maintaining an Asian 'arms registry' or encouraging military armaments transparency and other confidence building measures.<sup>3</sup> There have been some mildly encouraging developments with regard to the ARF. For instance, after the second meeting of the ARF in Brunei in July 1995, some members of ASEAN saw a "Chinese mellowing over the territorial claims in the South China Sea" (though still characterizing their claims as 'indisputable').<sup>4</sup>

While the idea of turning ASEAN into a multilateral regime capable of providing stability for East Asia is still in its infancy, it does seem to hold promise in areas important to some in East Asia. It has the double benefit of having a certain amount of legitimacy because it is an organization of Asians discussing Asia's security while at the same time involving powers (though not full members) from outside the region (a concept which seems important to resolving conflicts in East Asia). On the other hand, some suggest that meetings such as the ASEAN-PMC have avoided the more contentious issues in order to get wider participation. They argue that such meetings could become so 'diluted' that they would lose their utility.<sup>5</sup> Some in East Asia, such as Singapore's Kishore Mahbubani, suggest that this desire to have a more inclusive organization is a very Asian notion because of its emphasis on "accommodation and consensus." On the other hand,

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., p. 28.

<sup>4</sup> "South-East Asia's Sweet Tooth," *The Economist*, 5 August 1995, p. 31.

<sup>5</sup> Kreisberg, Chiu, and Kahan, p. 23.

according to Mahbubani, European security regimes formed during the Cold War are more exclusive in nature because they were built to counter a very specific threat.<sup>6</sup>

Another potential drawback of expanding the ARF into a multilateral regime for a larger part of Asia might be hindered by cultural notions of hierarchy that exist in the region. It seems hard to imagine that the larger powers in East Asia (China, Japan, Russia, or even Korea) would be pleased to negotiate security issues at a table where tiny countries like Singapore, Brunei, or New Zealand also have a voice. This *might* be acceptable for the United States which is more interested in the overall stability of the region. However, it might be more difficult to sell to those states involved in one of the many territorial disputes. In marked contrast to Western Europe, all of the major East Asian states are involved in what may prove to be contentious territorial disputes: China and Japan over the Senkaku Islands; China and Taiwan; China and various states over the Spratly Islands; Japan and Russia over the Kurile Islands.

A second option concerns the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) organization. APEC was initiated by Australia in 1989 as a forum for economic dialogue among seventeen heads of state: Australia, the United States, Canada, New Zealand, Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Mexico, Papua New Guinea, and the seven ASEAN states. Some have suggested expanding APEC to deal with security related issues. Adding a 'security caucus' to this organization might get more broad support because it is less focused on a subregion than ASEAN.<sup>7</sup> Even if security issues are not formally added to the APEC meeting agenda, the gathering of eighteen heads of

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<sup>6</sup> Mahbubani, Kishore, "The Pacific Way," *Foreign Affairs*, January/February 1995, p. 110.

<sup>7</sup> Kreisberg, Chiu, and Kahan, p. 22.



state seems likely to result in the discussion of security issues.<sup>8</sup> It is worth noting that APEC is still a fairly small organization. In 1993, APEC's annual budget was only about \$2 million. Also, APEC is still a consultative organization, rather than one able to hold negotiations on specific issues.<sup>9</sup> Some of the leading proponents of an expanded role for APEC call for the founding the Asian equivalent to the Conference of Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE). Unlike APEC, CSCE is specifically geared to deal with regional security issues.<sup>10</sup>

A third option might be a multilateral effort sponsored by the United Nations. Some countries in East Asia, such as Japan and South Korea, have shown an interest in recent years in multilateral efforts sponsored by the United Nations. South Korea has had a history of being involved with the United Nations. In 1948, United Nations sponsored elections established South Korea and the United Nations fought to defend South Korea two years later. Of course, the United Nations still maintains a presence on the Korean Peninsula aimed at preventing conflict between North and South Korea. South Korea has also been an active supporter of programs such as UNESCO in the past.<sup>11</sup> Both Korea formally entered the United Nations in 1991 and South Korea dispatched a 250-man construction battalion to Somalia in 1993 in support of a United Nations peacekeeping operation.<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>8</sup> Cossa, p. 27.

<sup>9</sup> Gibney, Frank B., "Creating a Pacific Community," *Foreign Affairs*, November/December 1993, p. 21.

<sup>10</sup> Brown, p. 442.

<sup>11</sup> Steinberg, pp. 169-170.

<sup>12</sup> *Republic of Korea Defense White Paper 1993-1994*, pp. 128-131.

As mentioned in Chapter III, since the Gulf War of 1991 Japan has increasingly viewed the United Nations as an organization through which it can play a larger role in regional and global security issues. In 1992, the Japanese Diet passed legislation allowing personnel from the JSDF to be dispatched abroad for United Nations sponsored peacekeeping operations. Since then, Japanese troops have served in Cambodia, Mozambique, and Zaire in this capacity. In addition, Japanese officials have served in the United Nations as 'honest brokers' in attempts to resolve conflicts in places such as Cambodia and the former Yugoslavia.

However, support for a United Nations sponsored multilateral effort could be undermined by the concerns of some smaller states in the region. Specifically, these states might be uneasy about the fact that only one power from the region, China, has a permanent seat (and therefore permanent veto power) on the United Nations Security Council. The prospect that Japan might someday obtain a permanent seat on the security council might not be very reassuring to other countries in East Asia. However, if Japan obtains a permanent seat on the United Nations Security Council in the context of continued participation in peacekeeping operations, this may give Japan some legitimacy on regional security issues. Another option some have suggested is the formation of a regional United Nations Security Council.<sup>13</sup>

Whatever the scheme, several points are worth making with regard to how a multilateral security arrangement might come into being. First, any security regime would likely come about slowly through incremental changes. This is necessary because of the amount of distrust in the region as well as the lack of models on which to base current

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<sup>13</sup> Kreisberg, Chiu, and Kahan, p. 21.

efforts. Given the diversity in East Asia, not only culturally but in terms of development, a slow approach seems necessary for any organization which might eventually hope to address human rights or environmental concerns.<sup>14</sup>

Second, many who argue for a multilateral security regime in East Asia call for American leadership in its creation. This is understandable since the United States presently wields the most power and influence in the region. As mentioned before, the presence of an outside power seems an important part of security efforts in East Asia. For instance, the Five Power Defense Arrangement, which serves as a confidence building measure between Malaysia and Singapore, includes 'outside powers' Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom. Of course, as mentioned in earlier chapters, not everyone in East Asia views American (or non-Asian) participation as absolutely necessary for the development of regional regimes (i.e., Mahathir and his proposed EAEC).<sup>15</sup>

Though most welcome United States involvement, an American concern is that any multilateral effort be genuinely multilateral. This means the various states involved must be willing to bear the burden of leadership, and perhaps more importantly, bear the cost of such an effort equitably. Despite the Clinton administration's enthusiasm, efforts which take the bilateral relationships, for which the United States pays a disproportionate amount, and transforms them into a multilateral regime, for which the United States pays a disproportionate amount, will likely be unpopular or unaffordable.

A third point is that for most states in Asia, an optimal multilateral security effort should work to alleviate tension between countries such as Japan and the Koreas as well

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<sup>14</sup> Nakanishi, p. 18.

<sup>15</sup> Johnson, "Japan in Search of a 'Normal' Role," p. 24.

as allay whatever fears they might have regarding China. As mentioned earlier in this thesis, many of the concerns in the region center around what role China will play in the future. If China continues to grow into the dominant power in the region (or the world), those who support a multilateral effort would like to involve China to such a degree that it would be inhibited from acting aggressively in the region. On the other hand, if China were to 'muddle through' or splinter into regional power centers, a multilateral effort would need to keep any one state from gaining too much influence over China.

Fourth, it seems likely that several overlapping multilateral efforts would exist simultaneously. This should not be surprising since the various multilateral organizations developed in Europe overlap to form a network of efforts (i.e., the European Union, NATO, and CSCE). This is important because East Asia faces the task of converting the important bilateral relationships in the region into a larger multilateral effort. In this sense, flexibility would seem to be important for any such arrangement to emerge.

## **2. Obstacles to Multilateralism**

Though there are some 'multilateral tendencies' emerging in East Asia, several factors which might stand in the way of a such a regime must be addressed. First, as mentioned earlier in this thesis, Buzan and Segal contend the Cold War suppressed a great deal of the traditional animosities in the region, such as the distrust and suspicion that exists between Japan and the Koreans. Without the Cold War "overlay" of superpower competition, "local patterns of amity, enmity, and balance of power" are beginning to reemerge.<sup>16</sup> Of course, one would expect the end of the Cold War to produce the same effect in places such as Western Europe. An argument can be made that these traditional

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<sup>16</sup> Buzan and Segal, pp. 7-8.

hostilities and rivalries in Western Europe have been ameliorated by multilateral efforts. Unlike Europe, which has some experience with multilateral regimes, East Asia is marked by an almost total absence of such institutions. Regional suspicions never allowed an organization like the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), the CSCE, or the European Community (and subsequently the European Union) to take hold in East Asia. After the Second World War, the United States sought to contain Communism in Asia through a number of bilateral relationships. This absence of a prior example on which to base multilateral efforts could prove to be a problem for East Asia.

A second possible explanation for the scarcity of multilateral 'tendencies' in East Asia is rooted in culture. East Asia is permeated by Confucianism, a system which attaches a great deal of legitimacy to relationships or institutions venerated in the past. This could make multilateralism difficult since there are no such organizations from some past 'golden age.' In addition, hierarchical relationships are fundamental to Confucianism and could make multilateral efforts difficult as various states attempt to gain the best position in some perceived hierarchy. This may be the reason why East Asia has never had an "autonomous international system among equal actors." In fact, the most well established relationship historically among the states of East Asia is a tribute system centered on China.<sup>17</sup> It seems unlikely that many in East Asia (outside China) are likely to support the re-emergence of such a regime.

In addition to historical animosities and cultural factors, a third (and in my opinion most severe) obstacle to multilateralism is the challenge from regional dynamics. While most of these dynamics have been discussed at some length already in this thesis, it is

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<sup>17</sup> Nakanishi, p. 18.

necessary to briefly review them. First, the presence of a strong American military presence in East Asia is generally seen as a stabilizing factor. In addition to the idea that the American presence deters countries in East Asia from acting too aggressively towards their neighbors, the United States is best suited to play the role of 'honest broker' on regional issues. Despite the perceived benefits to regional stability, there is a real likelihood of a significant decrease in the number of American military forces permanently stationed in East Asia. As mentioned earlier, a decreased presence could result from factors such as the unification of the Korean Peninsula or American unwillingness to maintain a large military force overseas absent a clear threat to justify the expense of doing so. In addition, the rationale for the American military forces in Japan includes the defense of South Korea. If the Korean Peninsula were to be unified, domestic pressure in the United States could also lead to the withdrawal of American forces in Japan (perhaps long before Korea is unified). If American military forces leave both South Korea and Japan, this would seem to be a most tempting occasion for various countries in Asia to reassess their security requirements. While this might prove to be powerful motivation to join a multilateral security regime, it could also lead in the opposite direction toward the formations of alliances, arms build ups, or arms races.

A second set of regional dynamics relate to China's future. As mentioned in earlier chapters, China's status is central to any consideration of East Asia's future. On the one hand, if China is 'strong,' this leaves open the possibility that it will attempt to gain influence over traditional 'buffer' areas (such as the Korean Peninsula or Southeast Asia) and make efforts to create a multilateral security regime more difficult. This idea is closely

related to an earlier dynamic mentioned. Specifically, it seems logical that concerns over a strong China dominating its neighbors would increase as the American military presence in East Asia decreases. As discussed in the previous chapter, without an American military presence or with a reduced military presence, Chinese activities would likely be intensely scrutinized for signs of an expansionist agenda (in fact this scrutiny has already begun). If it grew so strong that the United States felt the need to 'contain' China (which Washington in 1995 denies as its goal), perhaps this would give birth to a multilateral security regime.<sup>18</sup> However, the United States would need to examine the rationale for participation in such a regime carefully. To what extent might American involvement in a regional security regime draw it into the conflict of another (perhaps minor) allied power over a territorial (or other) dispute of no concern to the United States? Furthermore, given the role the United States has played and continues to play in East Asia, America might be hesitant or economically unable to take part in a collective security arrangement for which it would be expected to pay.

On the other hand, a 'weak China' also has the potential to cause conflict. As stated earlier, while I tend to believe someday China will rise to be the most powerful country in Asia, this remains speculation on my part. For this reason, it is also important to consider the prospects for multilateralism in East Asia if China is unable to translate its economic growth into a strong centralized government. For instance, if China splintered into a number of power centers around areas of economic growth, how would this affect

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<sup>18</sup> Some might question how 'multilateral' an organization is if it excludes a major power in the region such as China. Is a regime formed to check Chinese influence in the region multilateral or is it an alliance? This question becomes even more difficult if a 'strong China' were to hold influence over the Korean Peninsula (as suggested in Chapter V). Any effort which excluded both China and the Korean Peninsula might have trouble calling itself an East Asian multilateral security regime.

the prospects for a multilateral security effort? Such an event would seem to eliminate one possible scenario mentioned above; specifically, that a strong China would hold great influence over buffer areas, and therefore, appear quite threatening to others in East Asia. Furthermore, a weak or splintered China might prove to be much less aggressive in the resolution of regional territorial disputes. This could be important because a more passive China might remove some of the impetus for a regional arms race. If we accept Buzan and Segal's notion that a strong China does not see itself as a status quo power and is willing to be aggressive on territorial disputes, would a weak China be more inclined to join a multilateral security regime and accept the status quo? However, multilateral efforts could be hampered if various states in East Asia (Japan, Korea, or Russia) have visions of carving out their own spheres of influence in China. Such a scenario (a fragmented China) would seem especially ominous if the regional power and influence of the United States continued to decline. Without American influence in the region, this would leave a vacuum in China for others to fill. A situation in which states are competing for influence over a weak or divided China would be ripe for conflict.

### **3. Support for Multilateralism**

Up to this point, I have discussed many barriers to the establishment of a multilateral effort. Yet, there are many in East Asia who advocate a multilateral approach. For instance, Japan and South Korea have been public supporters of this approach in recent years. What factors exist which might encourage the formation of a multilateral security regime?



First, impulses toward multilateralism might emerge if East Asia were to form a regional trading block in the future, perhaps to compete with the European Union or NAFTA. Some Asian leaders have criticized the United States because it preaches free trade but NAFTA excludes all of Asia.<sup>19</sup> If East Asia were to build such a trading block it might provide the necessary trust, between countries such as Japan, China and the Koreans, for a collective security arrangement--especially if the rest of the world appeared menacing. Today, such a move seems unlikely because of the amount of exports East Asia sends to Europe and North America, but it might be something that would appear to be more viable in the future.

A second factor to consider is the extent to which the United States is able and willing to promote a multilateral effort. If America continues to show the wherewithal to be the strongest player in East Asia, then perhaps such an effort could come to fruition. However, some have mentioned that while the Clinton administration preaches the virtues of multilateralism, it has more often acted unilaterally in its trade and human rights policy in East Asia.<sup>20</sup> In addition, for such an effort to succeed, the present enthusiasm for multilateralism would need to exist in the White House for several consecutive administrations.

Third, perhaps the most likely catalyst for the formation of a multilateral security regime would be the rise of a 'strong China.' A strong and aggressive China could be threatening to various states in East Asia (including Japan and the Koreans) and cause them to form some type of alliance or collective security regime to counter the threat. In realist

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<sup>19</sup> Kreisberg, Chiu, and Kahan, p. 10.

<sup>20</sup> Manning and Stern, p. 87.

parlance, states like the Koreas, Japan, and the United States would balance against a strong China. In this particular case, Korean animosity toward Japan would seem to make this course of action difficult for Korean leaders to sell at home. However, a serious threat might be exactly what it takes for Koreans and Japanese to get along. It would not be the first time two former adversaries put aside their differences (perhaps temporarily) in the face of a serious threat. After all, the United States allied itself with the Soviet Union during the Second World War largely because it believed it to be the lesser of two evils.

Finally, I should probably be careful in highlighting the difficulties of multilateralism because of the historical animosities. In dismissing the possibility of multilateral efforts because of these animosities, it could lead one to describing the situation using tautological reasoning: no multilateralism exists because of historical animosities and historical animosities prevent the emergence of a multilateral approach. In fact, an argument can be made that these animosities are strong motivation for multilateralism. The rationale for the creation of the European Union included the hope that integration would assuage the traditional differences between its members--particularly between its two biggest proponents, Germany and France. Moreover, diplomats throughout most of the capitals of Western Europe hope integration will lead to a Germany so economically and politically enmeshed in Europe that it would not be in Germany's own interest to seek hegemony. In other words, the goal of the European Union is to 'Europeanize' Germany and preempt efforts to 'Germanize' Europe. Similarly, an ideal multilateral effort in East Asia would hope to 'Asianize' countries such as Japan and China to preempt visions of hegemony in Tokyo or Beijing.

#### 4. Prospects for Multilateralism

So now I return to the question asked at the outset of this section. What is the possibility for a multilateral security effort in East Asia? That is not an easy question to answer from where I stand. Multilateralism makes a great deal of sense in the abstract. Various countries, subordinating their petty concerns for the benefit of some greater good. That is how a family, neighborhood, state, and planet should work. However, I tend to see the situation through the eyes of a realist which makes me skeptical of such a regime emerging. Realists argue that what we call multilateral regimes still fundamentally reflect the wishes of the dominant powers. Chalmers Johnson asserts that the very notion of collective security is based on "dubious logic." For instance, "In cases where it has been said to work, such as NATO in Europe, hegemonic and balance of power considerations operated beneath the rhetoric of collective security."<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, abstract considerations aside, the trends in East Asia are not very encouraging: the lack of existing regimes to build upon; various states distrustful of each other and unaccustomed to dealing with each other except in context of the Cold War; a number of possibly contentious territorial disputes; the possibility of powers emerging uninterested in maintaining the status quo; and, the questions surrounding the long-term ability of the United States to maintain the stability of the region through its military presence. In a broader sense, if this region was unable to produce a collective security structure when it had a clear identifiable threat from the Soviet Union, why would it be able to do so now absent a clear threat?

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<sup>21</sup> Johnson, "Rethinking Asia," p. 26.

On the other hand, some in Asia believe collective security is the answer--even for countries such as South Korea and Singapore which would not be the major powers in such an arrangement. For instance, Kishore Mahbubani rejects the realist notion that such regimes are run by the dominant powers; "contrary to the conventional wisdom in many European textbooks on international relations, the formation of these networks is driven not by major powers but by medium sized or small powers." To back up his claim he cites the fact that APEC was the idea of Australia and the ARF grew out of ASEAN.<sup>22</sup> Of course, the realist response to this assertion would concede that these initiatives were conceived by minor powers. However, have they done anything diametrically opposed to the interests of the dominant power in the region? Moreover, witness the chilly reception received by Mahathir's suggested East Asian Economic Caucus (although, in fairness, the idea has not died yet).<sup>23</sup>

Finally, though I have my doubts about the chances for the emergence of a multilateral security regime, if it is to happen I believe it will occur under the following conditions: China is weak or fragmented; with the assistance of American influence; and, in a regime that fundamentally emphasizes economic concerns, such as APEC, and later gradually takes on the more potentially divisive security issues.

#### **B. TERMINATING THE 'UNEQUAL TREATY'**

The previous section discussed the possibility of transforming the bilateral relationship into a multilateral regime. Now the discussion turns to 'updating' the security relationship between the United States and Japan outside the context of multilateralism. I

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<sup>22</sup> Mahbubani, p. 110.

<sup>23</sup> Manning and Stern, p. 83.

believe the fundamental objective of such change would be to make the relationship truly mutual and equal. The term 'unequal treaties' has a rich history in East Asia and generally refers to a period (mainly from the middle of the nineteenth century to the early twentieth century) when the imperial powers of the West imposed treaties on various East Asian states. In these treaties, countries such as China were forced to give up territory and sovereignty under the coercive pressure of superior Western military technology.

While the Mutual Security Treaty between the United States and Japan has no such provisions, an argument can be made that it is unequal in other ways. From the point of view of the United States, American military forces not only help to provide stability for a region with which it competes economically, but are also the ultimate guarantor of Japan's security. If a country attacks Japan, United States military forces would be expected to help repel that attack. Given the fact that a large number of American military forces are stationed in Japan, an attack on Japan is effectively an attack on the United States. Japan has no such pledge to come to the aid of the United States if it were to come under attack. On the other hand, Japan might argue that the treaty is unequal because Japan provides billions of dollars to help pay for American troops stationed in Japan but does not have an active role in the forming or executing of security policy as other American allies do in Western Europe or South Korea. The United States still treats Japan as the 'younger brother' in the relationship and often acts unilaterally or dictates terms. Of course, Japan can take some of the blame for this type of relationship because it has avoided involving itself in regional security matters for decades (until recently).

Whatever the case, the fact remains that the MST simply reflects the period in which it was created--the United States was the dominant power in the world and Japan was rebuilding itself from the destruction of the Second World War.<sup>24</sup> At the time, the United States was very interested in building a 'bulwark' against the spread of Communism in Asia and looked to Japan to play a part in a containment strategy. Several factors, including the concerns of Japan's neighbors, America's own concerns, and skillful political maneuvering on the part of Japan, produced a treaty in which Japan's primary role was to pursue the Yoshida Doctrine (economic rehabilitation of Japan; cooperation with the United States on political and economic issues; limited defense capability; and providing the United States with the right to base military forces in exchange for an American security guarantee). Again, given the circumstances and the distribution of power, it seems unlikely that a truly equal and mutual treaty could have emerged between the United States and Japan in 1951. However, given the changes in recent decades, the circumstances of 1951 do not explain why the treaty remains in its present form in 1995. While a new and somewhat changed MST was signed in 1960, it *still* reflects the interests, concerns, influence, and status of the early days of the Cold War. At the time the MST was formed (and for decades afterward), I believe it made good sense for both countries. However, several factors inevitably made the treaty obsolete--Japan's tremendous economic recovery after the Second World War; the inability of the United States to play the security role it once did during the Cold War; and, of course, the absence of the 'Soviet' threat which brought about the treaty in the first place. Simply stated, the MST

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<sup>24</sup> The treaty was actually signed in 1951, came into force in 1952, and was revised slightly in 1960.

does not fit the realities of the post-Cold War era. I believe it should be redrawn so that it fits present circumstances.

In fact, there have been American calls for fundamentally changing the security treaty with Japan well before the end of the Cold War. The arguments I have made that the relationship does not match the realities of 1995 were also true in 1985 or 1975 (though perhaps this disjuncture became especially noticeable with the end of the Cold War). In 1985, Edward A. Olsen argued that "the United States should not be Japan's patron but its partner." He went on to outline a course of action in which the treaty could be redrawn with both the United States and Japan agreeing upon a set of strategic interests to pursue and both pledging to support each other equally toward those ends. For Olsen, an important concept was that the level of support be as equal as possible. In other words, if Japan could only agree to support the United States in some limited fashion, then the United States would only support Japan at that same level. The goal of such a policy, in addition to making it fundamentally more fair to all concerned, would be to expose Japan to the stark realities of the cost involved in maintaining security. In addition, it might coax Japan into a larger role by implying that if Japan did not help to accomplish the security tasks at hand, then some of those tasks would just not get done (at least not by the United States).<sup>25</sup> While Olsen's arguments on equitable burdensharing were made in the context of containing the Soviet Union, many of the concepts remain the

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<sup>25</sup> Olsen, Edward A., *U.S.-Japan Strategic Reciprocity* (Stanford CA: Hoover Institute Press, 1985), pp. 114-142.

same if the security relationship between the United States and Japan is to be viable in the long-term.<sup>26</sup>

As mentioned in earlier chapters, there would not be universal agreement on any such move to 'save' the alliance at all. Some Americans view the relationship with Japan as an unnecessary, expensive, and potentially 'entangling' alliance and, more fundamentally, some critics challenge the notion that American military forces are necessary to maintain stability in East Asia. For instance, Chalmers Johnson sees the current relationship between the United States and Japan as harmful to both countries. For the United States, absent the implications of the Cold War, the alliance is unnecessary and out of touch with the economic threat Japan (and the region as a whole) poses to America. In Japan, the relationship helps to perpetuate a political system and the vested interests which Johnson sees as the cause of Japan's inability or unwillingness to play a security role commensurate with its economic power.<sup>27</sup> Like Johnson, Donald C. Hellmann calls the alliance between the United States and Japan "an anachronism" which has survived from the American military occupation of Japan following the Second World War.<sup>28</sup> As discussed earlier in this thesis, some critics of the alliance have more fundamental concerns. For instance, Doug Bandow argues that the Second World War

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<sup>26</sup> It is worth noting that Professor Olsen no longer believes American policy should be aimed at developing a reciprocal alliance between the United States and Japan for the same reasons. In fact, in recent years he has directly questioned the utility of maintaining the alliance at all in its present configuration absent the imperatives of the Cold War. For detailed discussion see "A New American Security Strategy in Asia?" *Asian Survey*, 12 December 1991, pp. 1139-1154; "A New Pacific Profile," *Foreign Policy*, Winter 1992-93, pp. 116-136; and "The U.S.-Japan Alliance in Disrepair? A Revisionist Critique," in Kyongsoo Lho, ed., *The United States, Japan, and East Asia* (Seoul Institute of International Studies, 1995), pp. 48-80.

<sup>27</sup> Johnson, "Rethinking Asia," p. 21.

<sup>28</sup> Hellmann, Donald C., "The United States and Asia in an Age of International Upheaval," *Current History*, December 1992, p. 403.



and the Cold War served to confuse many Americans as to the proper role of the government in the United States. Bandow argues that, rather than policing the world, "the primary duty of the United States government is to safeguard the lives of its own citizens--servicemen included--not sacrifice them for even seemingly worthy causes."<sup>29</sup> In this context, Bandow questions America's current security commitments in East Asia:

The Clinton Administration, following the lead of its predecessor, also seems committed to retaining at least 100,000 troops in East Asia. Japan is the world's second-ranking economic power and faces no serious military threats; nevertheless, Tokyo apparently is slated to continue as an American defense dependent indefinitely. South Korea has 12 times the GNP and twice the population of Communist North Korea, yet Clinton suggests that United States forces will remain so long as Seoul wants them, which could be forever.<sup>30</sup>

From another angle, if the United States is interested in maintaining good relations with China, a military alliance with Japan could make future Chinese leaders uneasy. After all, military alliances are generally aimed at someone. The main reason Chinese leaders show support for the current security relationship between the United States and Japan is because they hope this keeps Japan from asserting itself in the region.

Despite its drawbacks, I believe the security relationship contributes to stability in East Asia and is ultimately in the interest of both parties. If my analysis is correct, then why terminate the present MST and negotiate a new one? After all, many in Japan and the United States might consider this a drastic step and argue that a more incremental approach is the best way to proceed on such matters. The Clinton administration has

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<sup>29</sup> Bandow, Doug, "Keeping the Troops and Money at Home," *Current History*, January 1994, pp. 10-12.

<sup>30</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 8.

pursued efforts of this type, most notably the "intensive security dialogue" which has come to be called the 'Nye Initiative' after Assistant Secretary of Defense Joseph S. Nye. This dialogue addresses key issues such as determining precisely the needs involved in the defense of Japan; attempting to come to an agreement on "regional forecasts and strategies;" and examining the possibilities for increasing Japanese participation on global security issues through peacekeeping and humanitarian efforts. While many of the broad concepts put forward by Secretary Nye are some of the important issues which must be addressed for the security relationship to endure, I contend that Dr. Nye 'pulls his punch' somewhat. For instance, in an issue of *Foreign Affairs*, Secretary Nye specifically rules out changes to the security treaty as part of the dialogue.<sup>31</sup> While it might be tempting to amend the current MST, I believe the process of negotiating a new treaty would have three primary benefits (in addition to bringing the relationship into present day reality). First, a new treaty would make a 'clean break' with the past and discard the Cold War 'baggage' the treaty presently carries. For instance, the symbolism of having a Mutual Support Treaty of 1997, instead of 1952 or 1960, might have some value in forcing all parties concerned to come to grips with the realities of the post-Cold War era. Second, if the United States called for such negotiations, this could spark a much needed debate in Japan over whether or not it will begin to play a security role in the region (or world) commensurate with its economic power. This would be the perfect time for those Japanese leaders who support such a notion, for instance Ozawa Ichiro, to make their case to the Japanese people.<sup>32</sup> Third, I believe negotiating an entirely new treaty is advisable

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<sup>31</sup> Nye, Joseph S., Jr., "The Case for Deep Engagement," *Foreign Affairs*, July/August 95, p. 97.

<sup>32</sup> In the debate over Japan's proper role in the world, the 'Peace Constitution' would obviously be an issue. Some commentators, such as Karel van Wolferen, argue that the United States should

because trying to implement incremental changes would present Japanese officials opposed to change with various opportunities to engage in 'footdragging.' As Olsen writes, "Tokyo is masterful at using tactics designed to postpone distasteful and costly defense decisions long enough that the United States becomes frustrated, or distracted by other concerns, and lets Japan slip away with a minimal response."<sup>33</sup>

Obviously, such a course of action has a certain amount of risk involved. For instance, the United States would need to propose negotiations on a new treaty without giving the appearance that this move was a prelude to an American withdrawal from East Asia. Also, there is no guarantee that a national debate in Japan regarding its role in the world would lead to a consensus that it should ally itself with the United States. In addition, many in Japan might see this as another instance where the United States is applying *gaiatsu* (outside pressure) and this could cause some resentment in Japan. While this might prove politically painful to Japanese leaders in the short-term, history has shown that sometimes *gaiatsu* is both painful and useful in Japan.<sup>34</sup> The role of American *gaiatsu* will be discussed in more detail later in this thesis, but two brief points are worth making now. First, scholars such as Kenneth Pyle believe real change in Japan's political system can only come with pressure from the outside. Pyle argues that outside pressure holds the best chance of neutralizing opposition from vested interests which benefit from the status

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encourage Japan to draft its own constitution (this is addressed further in the next chapter). Again, at first glance this seems quite a drastic measure. American politicians and diplomats would undoubtedly feel uneasy because they are interfering in Japan's 'internal affairs.' I do not believe they should. After all, the present constitution was drafted essentially by Americans and imposed on the Japanese. Like the MST, the present Japanese constitution was drafted in a time in history which has little relevance to the realities of 1995.

<sup>33</sup> Olsen, *U.S.-Japan Strategic Reciprocity*, p. 114.

<sup>34</sup> For instance, an argument can be made that Japan's new role as a supporter of United Nations peacekeeping efforts would not have come about without the pressure exerted on Japan by the United States around the time of the Gulf War in 1990 and 1991.

quo (not only in Japanese politics but on broader economic and security matters as well).<sup>35</sup> Second, it is important to note that *gaiatsu* or *shokku* (shock) are not ends but means to an end. Outside pressure can only hope to positively influence Japanese leaders when there is a clear alternative offered by the United States.<sup>36</sup> Ultimately, the risk involved in pressing for a new treaty must be weighed against the perhaps less obvious but nonetheless present risk of continuing with a treaty not in touch with the realities of the post-Cold War era. A well-crafted treaty might be precisely what is needed to reinvigorate the security relationship between the United States and Japan to meet to challenges of the next century.

What would a well-crafted treaty include? Several issues come to mind. First, in a general sense, the agreement should specifically state that its purpose is to outline how the United States and Japan can work *together* to maintain a stable and peaceful Asia. Second, toward that end, the treaty should outline a new relationship were Japan gradually increases its role on regional security matters. Japan could increase its security role in a number of ways. For instance, Japan could take up offers it has received in the past for joint military maneuvers (notably with Southeast Asian countries) or it could entertain other traditional confidence building measures (i.e., port visits, officer exchanges) with any country interested in doing so. Given the historical distrust in the region and the limited role Japan's military has played in past decades, the SDF could make use of every opportunity to build confidence (among others in Asia) in its ability to carry out operations designed to enhance regional stability (U.N. peacekeeping is a first step).

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<sup>35</sup> Pyle, p. 111.

<sup>36</sup> Olsen, *U.S.-Japan Strategic Reciprocity*, p. 115.

Third, the treaty should be genuinely mutual. If presently an attack on Japan is a *de facto* attack on the United States, then a mutual and equal treaty might outline that an attack on the United States (at least while operating in the interest of East Asian security) in a *de facto* attack on Japan. Fourth, the United States could pledge to keep a certain amount of troops stationed in East Asia--though it should probably be a number substantially less than the present 100,000. It would be wise to plan in the medium- and long-term future that all American military forces will be withdrawn from the Korean Peninsula. As mentioned in earlier chapters, domestic support for a long-term presence on the Korean Peninsula is understandably weak. Absent the implications of the Cold War, and assuming the eventual resolution of outstanding nuclear and unification issues, I see no American interest served by permanently stationing 37,000 military personnel in South Korea.

An eventual goal of such a treaty might be to allow Japan to take the lead on security issues in its neighborhood while the United States plays a smaller role in East Asia (in relative terms). However, while I have mentioned the possibility of having fewer military personnel in East Asia, I believe a total withdrawal of personnel would be a mistake. There is value in a permanent military presence beyond the logistical considerations that it makes it easier for the United States to act in East Asia when necessary. The additional value is that a permanent presence symbolizes a level of commitment beyond what is attained through periodic joint exercises, port calls, or officer exchanges.

### **C. A SYSTEMIC VIEW: CORRECTING THE DISEQUALIBRIUM**

There are systemic arguments which would help explain American efforts to 'update' its relationship with Japan. As mentioned in earlier chapters, Gilpin's fifth assumption is that "if disequilibrium in the system is not resolved then the system will be changed." The dominant power (which is being challenged) has two options in attempting to restore equilibrium. It can either "increase the resources devoted to maintaining its commitments and position in the international system" or "reduce its existing commitments in a way that does not ultimately jeopardize its international position" (or a combination of both).<sup>37</sup> The two methods for increasing these resources are to increase taxation (or tribute in past times) or to more efficiently use those resources allocated to system maintenance. Increasing efficiency, which Gilpin refers to as "rejuvenation," means broad reforms of the society and its institutions. Gilpin believes this is the preferred course of action for a dominant state in relative decline. However, it is also a difficult one because vested interests hinder reforms, especially as a society ages. It is probably because of these difficulties that dominant states in such circumstances often steer away from the 'optimal rejuvenation' and favor a more pragmatic response--reduce existing commitments without resigning their position in the international system.<sup>38</sup>

As mentioned earlier, there are three methods by which a hegemon can reduce costs and maintain its position in the system. The first two seem unlikely courses of action for the United States: eliminate the source of its relative decline (essentially this means destroying or weakening rising powers) or expand influence in the system further in hopes

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<sup>37</sup> Gilpin, p. 188.

<sup>38</sup> Ibid., pp. 188-189.

that this expansion will lead to less costly defensive perimeters. The third course of action, reducing foreign policy commitments or retrenchment, probably best describes the actions of the United States in this scenario. Gilpin broadly mentions three types of retrenchment: unilateral abandonment; alliance-seeking with rising but less threatening powers; and, making concessions to a rising power.<sup>39</sup>

In my first scenario (Chapter IV--East Asia's Policeman?), I hinted that events might cause the United States to pursue something close to what Gilpin calls abandonment (a more inward focus or a more isolationist approach). In the present scenario, I believe the United States would be exhibiting behavior consistent with the last two forms of retrenchment (alliance seeking and concessions). Whereas in my first scenario the United States chooses to turn inward, in this scenario it would allow the rising power, Japan, to play a larger role without totally isolating itself. In effect, the end of the Cold War, and the accompanying 'Soviet' threat, provides the United States with an opportunity to renew the alliance in such a way that it is more cost effective. At the same time, the 'concession' made to Japan is a larger role in East Asia's security policy.

In general, Gilpin is pessimistic about the chances for peaceful change but acknowledges some instances where it has occurred. For instance, the United States replaced the United Kingdom as the dominant power in the system without going to war. More interestingly, earlier in this century when the United Kingdom was still the dominant power in the international system, it formed an alliance with Japan; "In the Anglo-Japanese alliance of 1902, Great Britain gave up its policy of going it alone and took Japan as its partner in the Far East. Accepting Japanese supremacy in the northwest Pacific as a

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<sup>39</sup> Ibid., pp. 191-193.

counterweight to Russia, Great Britain withdrew to the south."<sup>40</sup> An argument can be made that the Anglo-Japanese alliance proved to be a stabilizing factor in the early part of this century. Furthermore, some consider the dissolution of that alliance (and the American maneuvering which helped bring about its demise) as a particularly destabilizing event in the years leading up to the Second World War.<sup>41</sup>

Furthermore, whatever relative decline the United States has experienced, as long as it remains the dominant naval power in the world, it makes sense for Japan to ally itself with America. Japan, as an island nation with few natural resources, has every motive to ally itself with a great naval power for as long as it conducts trade by sea. Just as earlier this century, when the United Kingdom's status as the premier naval power made that alliance particularly attractive to Japan, I believe this remains true for Japan.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., p. 196.

<sup>41</sup> Pyle, Kenneth, "Japan and the Future of Collective Security," in Unger, Danny and Paul Blackburn, eds., *Japan's Emerging Global Role* (Boulder CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 1993), pp. 100-101.



## **VIII. CONCLUSION: COMMON THEMES**

To conclude I shall return to the central question introduced in the early pages of this thesis. Given the dynamics discussed in my scenarios, what is the long-term viability of the security relationship between the United States and Japan? While this thesis has outlined the essential dynamics involved, the fundamental question is still very much an open one. More specifically, which of my four scenarios is most likely to occur in the future? Ultimately, accurately assessing which of my scenarios will most resemble the future rests upon three important themes: China's future status, American ability to lead in East Asia, and Japanese political reform. In these concluding pages, I will explore these themes and attempt to predict how they may influence my scenarios.

### **A. CHINA'S FUTURE**

A sizable portion of this thesis has been dedicated to considering what is 'in the cards' with regard to China's future. Specifically, can China grow strong enough to change the rules of the international system? It is interesting to note what events would allow China to do so. Gilpin argues that the most important underlying factors which cause change within the international system are "accretive factors such as economic growth and demographic change" (i.e., steady economic growth or population shifts). These factors act over long periods of time and change is eventually put in motion by any number of "triggering mechanisms." These triggering mechanisms, in the form of "major technological, military, or economic changes," ultimately favor or harm the position of various states in the system and this leads to change.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Gilpin, p. 55.

If such a chain of events were to benefit China, what would this mean to the security relationship between the United States and Japan? While I will not use absolute terms to attempt to predict the future, I contend China's future is the relatively most important factor in assessing which of my four scenarios is the most likely. This is primarily because I view the international system from the realist or neorealist point of view. While many factors have been mentioned which affect the relationship between Japan and the United States, the most sound explanations for changes in international politics are found at the systemic level. For instance, while China's future and its effect on the security relationship only loosely approximates a formula (i.e., a 'strong China' will equal a strong alliance), I feel confident that a 'strong China' would create an environment in which it is easier for the alliance to endure. Such an environment would favor scenario three (A Regional Threat 'Rescues' the Alliance) and scenario four (Updating the Relationship). In both cases, China would unwittingly help to sustain the relationship between the United States and Japan by providing a common threat.

On the other hand, a 'weak China' would favor scenario one (East Asia's Policeman?) and scenario two (Japan Becomes 'Normal'). An environment which includes a 'weak China' would be ripe for conflict between the United States and Japan. Why is this so? Again, Gilpin is especially useful in answering this question. Gilpin posits that states only seek to change the international system (a process inherently full of conflict) when the expected gains of doing so outweigh the expected costs involved. What kind of changes might states, such as Japan, attempt to make in a 'weak China' environment? A likely change pertinent to this thesis is that Japan would seek to exercise

greater influence over its neighbors than it presently does. This would seem especially likely given the relative decline in American influence in the region. Gilpin points out that periods of great stability in the international system have historically come when there was a clear understanding of the hierarchy of power and influence.<sup>2</sup> Therefore, the reason for the potential change (and instability) is the lack of a clear hierarchy in the system caused by a relative American decline, and a Japanese gain, in influence and power.

## **B. AMERICA'S ABILITY TO LEAD**

While I consider China's future to be the most important factor in assessing the long-term viability of the United States-Japan security relationship, another theme which must be addressed is the future ability of the United States to lead in East Asia. If the alliance is to endure it must reflect the present distribution of power in the world. While the United States is not the unquestioned power it was in 1950, it is still the most powerful country in the world. However, some believe America is squandering the power and influence that it still holds. In an article in *Orbis*, Karl D. Jackson argues that the United States has been "marginalized" in Asia. He notes some historical reasons for this turn of events. First, in the past Asia was dominated by outside wealthy Western powers. As Asia's economic fortunes continue to increase, Asia will be (and is already) less willing to "accede to the blandishments of any outsiders." Second, many in Japan, as well as the 'Asian tigers,' believe they have found an economic development model that the West cannot match. When considering American demands or ultimatums, Asian leaders might consider that the 'Western' course of action may be only one of many options. Third, while American trade with Asia is growing in importance to the United States, Asian trade

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<sup>2</sup>Gilpin, p. 31.

with the United States is becoming less important. Jackson notes that the amount of Japanese exports sent to the United States has dropped from 40 percent of Japan's total exports in the 1980s to about 28 percent in recent years. According to Jackson, "the ability of any United States government to force Asia to do America's bidding has declined in direct relationship to the proportion of a country's exports being sold in the United States market."<sup>3</sup>

However, Jackson contends American influence is falling too fast to be attributed solely to these historical trends. He asserts that an aggravating factor in America's decline in influence is related to the "international credibility" of the United States. Jackson defines international credibility as a "combination of realistic goals, proportionate capabilities, a coherent alliance system, and the ability to execute policies under crisis conditions." He goes on to argue convincingly that the United States has "simultaneously expanded its goals while shrinking capabilities, weakening vital alliances, and displaying disturbing indecisiveness."<sup>4</sup>

The primary purpose of this section is to highlight the causes of the decline in American influence and Jackson does this well. For this reason, it is interesting to outline Jackson's solution which consists of seven recommendations he believes would return the United States to a "position of dominance" in Asia. The recommendations hardly seem controversial and they would probably find wide (but not absolute) agreement in the United States. Indeed, the Clinton administration might claim it is working toward some of the very same goals. Specifically, Jackson recommends the following: that all

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<sup>3</sup> Jackson, Karl D., "How to Rebuild America's Stature in Asia," *Orbis*, Winter 1995, pp. 12-13.

<sup>4</sup> *Ibid.*, p. 13.

American Asian policies be reviewed and prioritized; that a military capacity and political will be restored to carry out America's Asian priorities; that American policy work to ensure the prosperity of the United States; that promoting American values as a foreign policy objective should only be done with a "sense of realism and proportion"; that the United States should "fully fund a military establishment commensurate with its geopolitical goals"; that foreign policy, as the president's most important duty, be treated as more than an item only given attention when the domestic agenda permits it; and finally, that the United States reinvigorate itself on domestic front in areas such as economic and technological competitiveness, trade imbalances, and budget deficits.<sup>5</sup>

Again, these suggestions would likely find wide agreement and some of them (i.e., policy reviews, restoring political will, economic prosperity) have almost achieved mantra status. While many of Jackson's suggestions are sound, they require a fair amount of political risk for American politicians. I can make my point by way of two examples. Jackson, with an eye toward his concept of international credibility, mentions the need to maintain a military capable of carrying out American "geopolitical goals" and calls on the Congress and the president to find the necessary funding for "shortfalls" in the military budget. Of course, this is not easy process. Assuming the military budget is underfunded (itself a statement which can bring heated debate), in an era of budget deficits which run into the hundreds of billions of dollars, how does one stand up and call for sharp increases in the defense budget? Jackson also asserts that foreign policy needs more of the president's attention. I personally agree with this statement but many other Americans (many of whom vote) might vehemently disagree and argue that foreign policy distracts

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., pp. 16-17.

the United States from its own problems at home. In fact, an argument can be made that President Bush's perceived indifference to domestic issues in favor of foreign policy hurt him at the polls in 1992.<sup>6</sup>

What can be done to carry out Jackson's recommendations? First, the 'reforms' necessary to rebuild America's stature can only succeed when the American people become convinced foreign policy deserves at least as much attention as the various domestic problems facing the United States. Only in such a climate can the needed reforms be made. Clearly, the burden of outlining foreign policy objectives and their importance is the province of the executive branch. This is an important task because, unlike many domestic political issues, most foreign policy objectives do not arise from support at the 'grass-roots' level. With the exception of highly publicized or particularly focused issues (i.e., American policy toward Cuba or American response to an obvious tragedy or injustice), most foreign policy is somewhat mundane and probably less well understood by average Americans. Witness the difficulty President Roosevelt had in garnering support to involve the United States in a European war until the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor (a feat which still required some dexterity on the part of the president) or the animosity directed at President Truman when he fired the popular, though in this instance misguided, General MacArthur during the Korean War. At the risk of sounding condescending, many legitimate foreign policy goals are not intuitively obvious to the average American--especially in the absence of the familiar Cold War security paradigm. Why is stability on the Korean Peninsula in the interest of the United States? Why are free trade agreements in the interest of the United States? Why is it in the interest of the

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<sup>6</sup> Schlesinger, p. 7.

United States to support archaic and repressive regimes in Kuwait or Saudi Arabia? If Taiwan is a long-time ally of the United States, a democratic regime, and a member of the United Nations, why would America choose to exchange ambassadors with Beijing but not Taipei?

I contend these questions and many others *can* be answered to the satisfaction of most Americans and show that foreign policy is a worthwhile endeavor. As mentioned, the executive branch, particularly the president, can help to reduce misunderstandings that may arise about legitimate foreign policy goals. The damage to America's stature in Asia has been aggravated, not by a lack of declarations of our foreign policy goals, but by a lack of action to back up the lofty rhetoric. This can make the best of American policies seem incoherent or lacking in credibility. For instance, as mentioned earlier in this thesis, some have criticized the Clinton administration for singing the praises of multilateralism in Asia while acting unilaterally on human rights and trade issues.<sup>7</sup>

There is another concept important to America's ability to lead which is mentioned frequently in the literature on East Asia. Specifically, many observers are disappointed with the amount or quality of attention given to East Asia by senior members of the executive branch (a problem which predates the Clinton administration). For instance, Michel Oksenberg writes:

With the noticeable exception of President George Bush, high American officials tended to look upon China with disdain and scorn. For all his many accomplishments, Secretary of State James Baker spent more nights in Ulan Bator, flying over China to go hunting in Mongolia, than he spent in either Beijing or Tokyo. And at this writing, after ten months of the Clinton

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<sup>7</sup> Manning and Stern, pp. 86-87.

administration, not a single top member of the foreign policy team--Warren Christopher, Les Aspin, Lloyd Bentsen, Mickey Kantor, or Anthony Lake--had met his Chinese equivalent in Beijing or Washington.<sup>8</sup>

Similarly, Karel van Wolferen argues that countries such as Japan deserve "more than three days a year of the president's time and the attention of third- and fourth-rank American bureaucrats."<sup>9</sup> Edward A. Olsen points to another dimension of this problem regarding precisely who deals with America's Asia policy:

....virtually all United States decisionmakers are Atlanticists whose entire working lives have been devoted to NATO- and EC-oriented affairs, focusing on Cold War threats from the Soviet Union. They have paid scant attention to the Asia-Pacific region, treating it as a corollary of United States global policy that can be readily adapted to policy changes in the European-Soviet region.<sup>10</sup>

Obviously, quiet diplomacy by minor officials has its place in America's dealings with East Asia. However, in a region so steeped in notions of prestige, hierarchy, and maintaining 'face,' it seems inexcusable that American political leaders only spend a fraction of the time in East Asia that they do in Europe or, perhaps, the Middle East.

Given the disturbing trends outlined above, how would a continued decline in American influence in East Asia affect my scenarios? This trend would be especially harmful to the relationship in scenarios one and two. In scenario one (East Asia's Policeman?), a lack of leadership or decline in influence on the part of the United States, perhaps manifested in incoherent policies toward East Asia, would only serve to encourage the belief among domestic groups in America that foreign policy is an unnecessary distraction. In scenario two (Japan Becomes 'Normal'), a deficit of American

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<sup>8</sup> Oksenberg, p. 99.

<sup>9</sup> van Wolferen, Karel, "Japan's Non-Revolution," *Foreign Affairs*, September/October 1993, p. 63.

<sup>10</sup> Olsen, Edward A., "A New American Strategy in Asia?" *Asian Survey*, 12 December 1991, p. 1140.



leadership would tend to make potential conflicts with Japan (i.e., over China policy) more serious. On the other hand, if the United States can rejuvenate its flagging influence, this might help reduce the likelihood of the type of conflict which would threaten the alliance.

The future of American's influence in East Asia is also important to scenarios three and four. With regard to scenario three (A Regional Threat 'Rescues' the Alliance), on the one hand, a decline in American influence would not help strengthen the relationship. This would make it more difficult for the United States and Japan to meet the threat from a 'strong China' (if it were to present itself). On the other hand, a regional threat would provide a clear rationale for the maintenance of good relations with Japan and perhaps cause the United States to exercise the leadership necessary to maintain the alliance (and boost its influence and credibility at the same time). With regard to scenario four (Updating the Relationship), I do not believe this scenario can coexist with a continued American decline in influence and leadership. In this case, renewed American leadership is assumed because it would play an integral part in bringing the security relationship into line with the realities of the post-Cold War era.<sup>11</sup>

### **C. JAPANESE POLITICAL REFORM**

While American leadership is needed for the security relationship to endure, Japan must play a role that matches its economic position in the world. In many ways, its political culture makes it difficult for Japan to exercise leadership on regional or global security issues. For instance, a serious challenge for Japan's security policy relates to the prime minister's ability to formulate and implement foreign policy as well as his ability to

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<sup>11</sup> As we shall see in the next section, some scholars believe the relationship will not be renewed without American leadership and initiative.

operate effectively as the Commander-in-Chief of the SDF. Unlike an American president, the prime minister in Japan is more of a "chairman of the board" than a "leader whose decision is final and authority unquestioned."<sup>12</sup> As mentioned in Chapter III, the Gulf War provided examples of weaknesses in Japanese leadership and crisis management. Some in Japan have acknowledged that this is a problem.

In *Blueprint for a New Japan*, Ozawa Ichiro outlined five problems in designing foreign policy which constrain the prime minister. First, Ozawa maintains there is a widespread perception in Japan that the government is little more than a "corporate lawyer" which only represents private interests. Obviously, given how the Japanese political system operates, it is easy to imagine the roots of such a perception. Ozawa argues that this is unfortunate because it causes a legitimacy problem when Japanese leaders try to formulate foreign policy; "Because the government is expected to serve only private interests, it has little authority available to do it when it asks something of the people regarding foreign policy." Second, Ozawa believes the style of democracy in Japan is not well-suited for crisis management. He explains that in many Western democracies elected officials take responsibility for dealing with a given crisis and their handling of it is judged afterward (presumably in the next election). However, when there is a crisis in Japan, the appropriate leaders are unable to take action because various elements (led by the media) call for an absolute consensus before action is taken. If action is contemplated without a consensus, there are vocal cries about the "tyranny of the majority." Similarly, Ozawa's third point relates to the Diet's ability to 'tie the government's hands' by calling for a unanimous decision before action can be taken. Ozawa maintains that this gives the

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<sup>12</sup> Holland, p.1.

minority party a "disproportionate veto power" over government policies. Fourth, Ozawa argues that the weakness of the prime minister's office leaves the Japanese government without "a center of political accountability." The prime minister is often unable to deliver a decision during a crisis and expect cooperation from others in the government. When a policy does go bad, often the prime minister is expected to take responsibility (perhaps resign) for the policy though he may have had no control over it. Finally, Ozawa argues that foreign policy (like other policy in Japan) is made in a "vertically divided administration." Essentially, this means each section of the government (such as the various ministries) is a realm unto itself which makes coordination of foreign policy extremely difficult.<sup>13</sup>

Ozawa calls for reforms that would allow the prime minister, and the government as a whole, to better formulate foreign policy. For instance, he recommends enlarging the size and scope of the prime minister's staff, electing the prime minister for a fixed term, and abandoning calls for an absolute consensus on policy issues. The problems Ozawa mentions are indicative of the fundamental structure of the Japanese political system. The reforms he suggests would undoubtedly be viewed suspiciously by many in Japan. Much of the resistance to such changes is rooted in the fact that the prime minister is often selected as a compromise between political party factions or because the individual is 'next in line' within an agreed upon seniority system. This system leads to a legitimacy problem because the prime minister is not necessarily a person chosen to lead or speak for the nation. Often the prime minister is a figure head while others wield power behind the

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<sup>13</sup> Ozawa, pp. 41-45.

scenes. Those behind the scenes may be unwilling to support changes that will increase the power of the office of the prime minister at their expense.

What is the likelihood Japan can make the changes necessary to allow it to better act on its security policy? The best answer is not very satisfying. It depends. Many of the challenges outlined above are rooted in domestic political issues. Like Ozawa, Karel van Wolferen believes one of the most serious problems facing Japan is the lack of accountability on the part of its political leaders. With regard to foreign policy, this lack of accountability makes it difficult to interact with other states on various issues. Because there is no single political entity that can speak for Japan internationally, other states tend to treat Japan with suspicion. In addition, as mentioned above, the legitimacy problems associated with the prime minister (and government in general) make change difficult. In many ways, Japan stands at a crossroads. If the current political system remains intact, then Japan will likely find these challenges quite problematic. On the other hand, if the recent political events represent a fundamental shift in domestic politics, then these challenges would be much more manageable.

If Japan's political system continues to be defined by a lack of legitimacy and run by factionalism, then Japan is heading down a difficult road that could very well get even more difficult. Increasingly difficult security issues will be thrust upon the political leaders of Japan. As mentioned in Chapter III, perhaps the decline of the LDP will disrupt the "cozy" relationships in Japan that are the root of the legitimacy and accountability problems. Since the fall of the LDP in 1993, much has been made of the possibility for a new political order in Japan. Indeed, there have been changes. While it still wields

considerable power, the LDP wields far less than during the Cold War. The biggest loser in the changes that have taken place in recent years is the JSDP. The rise of the New Frontier Party (NFP) in 1994-95 and its apparent ability to win votes without the deep pockets of the other parties, seems to indicate that at least some Japanese voters view the NFP as a party which has the potential to rule. However, these changes mask an undercurrent of "political malaise" in Japan. Voter turnout for the July 1995 Upper House Diet elections reportedly dipped below fifty percent for the first time since the end of the Second World War--perhaps because the ruling coalition and "its cynical mix of left and right is regarded with contempt."<sup>14</sup> It is difficult to judge the mood in Japan by dissecting the recent changes in the political landscape. If the electorate were to remove both the LDP and the JSDP in favor of the NFP, this would seem to signify a serious change. After all, the NFP contains 'reformers' such as Ozawa. However, not all the NFP members are as vocal as Ozawa about the need for reform and NFP party platforms outline typically vague goals which avoid controversial issues in favor of bland pronouncements in favor of global disarmament or environmental awareness. Nor are the members of the NFP new to politics. In fact, the Japanese electorate might be inclined to view the rise of the NFP as just another factional squabble until circumstances prove otherwise. The NFP was formed out of nine opposition parties in December 1994.<sup>15</sup> What is the likelihood such an organization can come to an agreement on substantive changes that need to be made in the Japanese political system? Furthermore, how dedicated is the Japanese electorate to supporting political change? In view of the low voter turnout in the recent elections, "If

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<sup>14</sup> "Awaiting the New Order," *The Economist*, 29 July 1995, p. 25.

<sup>15</sup> Smith, Charles, "Problem Child," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 22 December 1994, p. 16.

voters wanted to slap the government in the face and strengthen the opposition, they chose a funny way of doing it.”<sup>16</sup> Such disinterest (by at least part of the electorate) could have unforeseen consequences. Van Wolferen warns that “a succession of weak coalitions” might lead to “further consolidation of unaccountable bureaucratic and business-bureaucratic power.”<sup>17</sup>

One area which could be hampered by a continuation of the political status quo (i.e., a weak coalition government) is Japan’s economic well-being. This is important to the United States if it expects Japan to play a wider role in regional security. Given the constant attention shown to the United States trade deficit with Japan and the constant characterization of Japan as an economic superpower (a term used liberally throughout this thesis), the fact remains that Japan is still recovering from the ‘bubble burst.’ For instance, still looming is at least 50 trillion yen (\$500 billion at 100 yen to the dollar) Japanese banks hold in bad debts from the “spending spree” of the 1980s. The solutions to this problem will not be easy. First, developing public support to ‘bailout’ Japan’s banks will not be easy in light of the fact that during the 1980s, “many of the bank’s best customers were corrupt politicians, stock speculators, and gangsters.” Second, because of the amount of bad debts, such a bailout would “involve deficit financing on a stupendous scale.”<sup>18</sup> If these are the tough circumstances facing Japanese politicians in the future, it seems matters would be made worse by a continuation of rule by weak coalition governments. This has the potential to be much more than just a Japanese domestic

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<sup>16</sup> “Murayama’s Defeat,” *The Economist*, 29 July 1995, p. 12.

<sup>17</sup> van Wolferen, “Japan’s Non-Revolution,” p. 63.

<sup>18</sup> Terry, Edith, “Cosmo Bailout Highlights Japan’s Bad-Loan Problem,” *The Christian Science Monitor*, 4 August 1995, p. 8. Terry reports that this figure of 55 trillion yen is an official figure that some consider “wildly conservative.”

problem. At a minimum, if Japan is to be a leader on regional security issues in concert with the United States, it must resolve its economic problems. At a maximum, some have more broadly based concerns about Japan's economic health and how it might affect the rest of the world. As the *Far Eastern Economic Review* observed, "a long period of deflation in the world's second-largest economy would have worrisome implications for growth elsewhere."<sup>19</sup> In attempting to grasp the scale of what a financial collapse in Japan would mean, some use frightening terms like "Great Depression."<sup>20</sup> It seems obvious that such a course of events would make a larger Japanese security role (as described in this thesis) extremely difficult.

This being the case, is there anything the United States can do to help bring about reform or political change in Japan? More fundamentally, is the internal politics of Japan the business of the United States? Actually, some scholars think little will change without American *gaiatsu*. Kenneth Pyle, when discussing the United States-Japan security relationship, writes:

Without American initiative an effective renewal of the alliance is not likely. Historically embedded obstacles keep Japan from taking the lead. Except in response to outside pressure, the political will, the necessary institutions, or the values and cultural resources do not exist to impel Japan to abandon its heretofore highly successful but narrowly self-generated vision of its world role. At the same time, there is a Japanese constituency for a more active international role in cooperation with the United States. This new internationalism arises less from any genuine liberalism than from a broadened conception of Japanese national interest.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Sender, Henny, "Waiting to Happen," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 August 1995, pp. 56-57.

<sup>20</sup> Holloway, Nigel, "Get Well Soon," *Far Eastern Economic Review*, 17 August 1995, pp. 58-59.

<sup>21</sup> Pyle, p. 142.

If a 'constituency' exists for a more active (and presumably responsible) role, what can the United States do to encourage this movement? Van Wolferen, who agrees with Pyle that the United States can play an important role, warns that punitive measures are not the answer. As mentioned in the last chapter, he believes Japan deserves more and higher level attention than it routinely receives from the American government. He goes on to suggest that the United States play upon Japan's desire to be accepted; "the greatest leverage comes from the desperate hankering on the part of Japan's elite administrators for acceptance of their country as a full political equal of the world's other major democratic states." This seems simplistic until one considers the extent to which prestige is valued in Japanese culture. Van Wolferen argues that American leaders should explain that until a "system of political accountability" exists in Japan, efforts to secure privileges such as a seat on the United Nations Security Council are unlikely to be won. Finally, the United States should encourage Japan to write its own constitution. The controversy this would cause might spark a much needed debate within Japan's civil society and put to rest the notion that the United States is Japan's "postwar parole officer."<sup>22</sup>

Genuine democratic changes would provide a different basis for politics in Japan. Ideally, rather than the current system of infighting by various cliques within political parties, a fundamental shift would take place in that politicians and political parties would take positions on issues and involve themselves in genuine debate. Hopefully, the result would be not a consensus, but a mature look at the real choices Japan faces with regard to its defense policy.

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<sup>22</sup> van Wolferen, 1993, pp. 63-65.



A change in Japanese political culture is no small task. The enormity of the challenge perhaps suggests the basic level at which change must occur. For instance, the distrust and suspicion of Japan held by some of its neighbors can only partially be attributed to what is commonly referred to as political culture. In addition to the distrust caused by the lack of accountability in Japan, distrust is also rooted in the apparent inability of some Japanese political leaders to admit mistakes in Japan's past. Unlike Western Europe, where German politicians have earnestly renounced the mistakes of the Nazi era, many of in East Asia are concerned with Japan's inability to thoroughly address comparable mistakes in its past. While Japanese leaders in the past have made apologies, at times they seemed part of perfunctory exercise rather than a genuine expression of remorse. This is not surprising since many Japanese politicians do not believe they should be apologizing about the past. Instead, because of the bombings at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, they have portrayed Japan as the true victim of the Second World War. Recently, when the JSDP and the New Party Harbinger attempted to pass a resolution apologizing for Japan's past which used terms such as "invasion" of Asia or the "colonial" rule in Korea, seventy percent of LDP Diet members opposed the resolution. Many of these members probably tend to take the nationalist view that the war in the Pacific was an attempt by Japan to "rid the continent of European colonialists." That many Japanese politicians take this view might partially be the result of the strong influence held by families of fallen soldiers--a lobby with reportedly strong organizational skills and over one million households in its membership.<sup>23</sup> However, it is worth noting that not everyone in Japan agrees with this version of history. For instance, *The Christian Science Monitor*

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<sup>23</sup> "The Symbols of Japan Past," *The Economist*, 3 June 1995, p. 31.

reported that Japanese leaders (including the mayors of Hiroshima and Nagasaki) have used "unusually direct" language in 1995 ceremonies commemorating the use of the atomic bomb to draw attention to Japanese wartime misdeeds as well as the view that Hiroshima and Nagasaki were "part of the conflict that preceded the bombings."<sup>24</sup>

How would Japanese political reform, or the lack thereof, affect my four scenarios? In scenario one (East Asia's Policeman?), a lack of political reform (and the accompanying setback to prospects for a more responsible security policy) in Japan would work to increase the perception in the United States that foreign policy distracts America from important issues and that the United States is being asked to bear an unfair burden for maintaining stability in East Asia.

In scenario two (Japan Becomes 'Normal'), on the one hand, a lack of political reform would only make worse the potential disagreements between the United States and Japan. On the other hand, it seems unlikely Japan could become 'normal' without undergoing some amount of political reform that would allow Japan to operate a coherent foreign policy and exercise political leadership in the region (unless a more regionally active Japan means a return to competing factions attempting to forward contradictory foreign policy goals as in the 1930's and 1940's).

In scenario three (A Regional Threat 'Rescues' the Alliance), I contend Japanese political reform is an important factor necessary to effectively meet the challenge of a regional threat. As stated at the end of Chapter VI, not even a regional threat would allow the relationship to endure as currently structured. An important part of maintaining

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<sup>24</sup> Barr, Cameron W., "Hiroshima Revisits the Bomb," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 7 August 1995, pp. 1 and 18.

the relationship for the long-term is a Japanese willingness to play a larger role in regional security--which depends heavily on changes in the manner in which Japan addresses security (i.e., Ozawa's concepts mentioned earlier in this section).

While political reform is *important* to scenario three, it is *critical* if scenario four (Updating the Relationship) is to be possible. The reasons for this are essentially the same as those for scenario three but the course of action in scenario four places even more demands upon Japan. Dealing with these demands would be easier in an environment which included the political reforms mentioned (i.e., political accountability, effective crisis management).

#### **D. VARIABLES THAT SHALL SHAPE THE FUTURE**

In these final pages I have discussed the variables (or themes) most important to the future of the relationship--undoubtedly there are more than the three mentioned here. Hopefully, I have made it clear that China's future is the most important factor while American leadership and Japanese political reform are important, but to a lesser extent. Perhaps the best way to characterize the themes mentioned here is to describe them as independent and intervening variables which potentially will affect the security relationship between the United States and Japan. Specifically, China's future (strong or weak) can be viewed as an independent variable able to cause real changes that either strengthen or weaken the United States-Japan security relationship. On the other hand, American leadership and Japanese political reform can be viewed as intervening variables which also affect the relationship but to a lesser extent. In other words, while neither of these themes

can independently determine the future of the alliance, both can shape the change (positive or negative) caused by some other independent variable.

Throughout this thesis I have highlighted factors which could cause a breakdown in the relationship between the United States and Japan. The very nature of the task (assessing the long-term viability of the security alliance) requires that I do so. However, I am not as pessimistic about the future of the relationship as some portions of this thesis might indicate. In addition to the perhaps cynical view that a strong China would help reinvigorate the alliance, other factors favor a close security relationship between the United States and Japan. For instance, American and Japanese interests overlap on some fundamental issues such as maintaining an economically and politically stable Asia. Ultimately, if Japan and the United States act to update their security arrangement they will do so for the most basic of reasons--self-interest. If the United States and Japan do not take action (in the form of a strong security alliance) to maintain a stable Asia in which both countries can thrive economically, what countries will?

While I am cautiously optimistic about the fate of the security relationship, the future clearly holds many challenges for the United States and Japan. The challenges outlined in this thesis can best be met if all parties concerned go into the future with eyes wide open and create a new security treaty which reflects the realities of the post-Cold War era. On the other hand, I am not optimistic about a 'muddle through' approach. Specifically, a situation where Japan continues to cling to the hope that it can maintain the best part of the Cold War security paradigm (security 'on the cheap') and at the same time find a leadership role in the international political system seems doomed to failure.

Similarly, the United States cannot have it both ways. If America genuinely wants Japan to play a larger security role it must sanction a leadership role in East Asia for Japan as well.

Much in the world has changed in the past five decades. While there was a time when the United States was interested in keeping Japan 'docile' or unable to play an important role in regional security, this is no longer the case. Similarly, the days in which Japan could pursue solely economic objectives are gone as well. I contend that history will judge the unique relationship that emerged between the United States and Japan after the Second World War as an aberration. No state can indefinitely rely on another to look after its security interests. Despite these changes, the present day does hold some similarities to the period in which the security alliance was formed. In those early days of the Cold War, the United States and Japan faced a world of uncertainty. The security relationship which emerged proved to be an effective tool in dealing with that world of uncertainty in the decades which followed. Similarly, the challenge in the coming years is to find the right formula to reinvigorate the alliance so that it can continue to be a source of stability in East Asia and the world.



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